



*THE "OVAL" SERIES OF GAMES*

EDITED BY C. W. ALCOCK

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# C R I C K E T

BY

WILLIAM L. MURDOCH

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J. M'C. BLACKHAM.

S. M. J. WOODS.



# CRICKET.

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## BATTING.

I THINK there cannot be the slightest doubt whatever that this branch in the noble game is the one that has the firmest hold upon all its votaries, and the one that is first thought of by the cricketer from his earliest days. One has only to watch a few youngsters playing to be thoroughly convinced this is true; you do not see them nearly tumble over one another to get the ball to do some bowling, or have a very hard fight as to where they shall field, if, in fact, they field at all; but how different it is when the turn comes to bat: then you hear different claims as to whose turn it is, all most eager, straining with all their might to enforce their right; and very often with two or three struggling for the possession of the solitary bat, the turn is taken by the strongest and fittest. This is repeated many times during the play and goes on each day. I have often watched youngsters playing, and all seemed imbued with the one idea, and that was to bat. As with youngsters, so it is as the cricketer grows up, for it is the exception to hear anyone say: "I am going out to have a bowl;" it is always: "I am going out to have a knock," and I must admit that having a knock is most enjoyable. I have very often heard the remark that so-and-so was a born cricketer, and have no doubt that there are a great number of people who firmly believe that first-class batsmen are born so, and not made. I am firmly convinced this belief is quite wrong, but would like to make one exception in favour of the G. O. M. of the cricket



world, W. G. Grace. If ever there was a born cricketer, it is he, and although he no doubt learned how to bat in the same way as others, yet I am firmly convinced he had bestowed upon him at his birth that exceptional ability which shone with such brilliancy for so many years, and placed him upon a pinnacle such as never has, or, to my mind, ever will be attained by any other cricketer. A good physique and a good eye are great essentials to the making of a good batsman, and I have often wondered whether, without the former, would W. G. Grace ever have been able to perform the wonderful things he has done at cricket? How often it happens that a batsman gets out through being tired, and in nearly every case this is occasioned by being out of condition; therefore it is very important to make a point of always being in condition.

I think the phrase, "Keep your left shoulder well forward" is the one that is principally and generally used by the cricket coach, or by any person giving a hint about batting. There can be no doubt that it ought always to be remembered, especially by the beginner, for by doing so it always is the means of your playing with a straight bat, and by strict attention at the beginning, it becomes in time to be part and parcel of your batting.

I am sure that almost every cricketer, in looking back upon his early crickoting days, always remembers the being told to "keep your left shoulder well forward." I must say it is not so with myself—for it was a long time before anyone thought it worth his while to tell me the golden rule; this, no doubt, was on account of the good cricketers of those days not taking any trouble with what J. Blackham is pleased to call all wicket-keepers, viz., Aunt Sallys. In my early days, although being in a state of blissful ignorance, I no doubt saw the rule most skilfully applied, for at that time my ideal of a batsman was no less a personage than W. Caffyn, of Surrey, who had shortly arrived in Australia. I used to watch and wonder how he kept the ball down so, and upon arriving at years of discretion, of course found out the great secret. What a

beautiful style Cassyn had, and I am glad to say that, not only did he impart to Australians his knowledge of batting and of the game generally, but he managed to stamp some of them with his style as well.

This same stylish play is, I think, answerable, in a great measure, for the variety of opinions as to the qualifications of a batsman to be considered first-class or not. There can be no doubt it affords the looker-on a far greater amount of pleasure to watch a player who has a fine, free style than one who has not, and who, by comparison, may appear to be cramped and look to be always in difficulties; and to see the two get fifty runs apiece, nine out of every ten of the onlookers would give as their opinion that the former was much the better batsman, while, at the time, all cricketers know the latter to be the superior player. Of course all players would naturally prefer to have a good style, but unfortunately that is denied to many. If it comes naturally to the player, well and good, but to force it is bad and does a very great amount of harm to the batting. After the beginner is told the proper way to stand at the wicket with his feet, let him play naturally and he will soon form and attain a style of his own, but should he try to imitate any player's particular style, he will do such harm to his batting that will take a considerable time to eradicate.

Then there are others who play a very slow game, and who are known in these days as "stone-wallers." This particular kind of batsman is not at all appreciated, no matter how good he is, and yet how very useful he is upon a side and what an amount of service he does, especially when it is a bowler's wicket, and he can be depended upon to keep up one end whilst the hard hitters do their duty at the other. It is not quite the number of runs he makes, but by stopping he receives safely many dangerous balls that might get rid of other batsmen, and so materially benefits his side. I think as nature provides the "stone-waller," it must have meant it to be the correct thing to always have one on your side.

Cricket is like everything else—to excel, a good beginning

must be made, a good groundwork must be laid down, and the young beginner cannot be too painstaking and careful. Do not get impatient or disheartened at your want of success; make up your mind to succeed, and by exercising perseverance and patience, and being thoroughly earnest about your practice, the result will be in every way satisfactory to yourself. When you are commencing, it is very essential that you should get the best advice possible, and when the advice is given, you should always try to remember and derive the fullest benefit from it. It may be that my reader may not be in the position to receive the advice from a public school coach or from any of the leading lights of the cricket world, at the same time there may be someone who, although not being termed a first-class player, will have the experience and knowledge to put you in the right way, and by telling and showing you, lay the necessary foundation in quite as able a way as perhaps those in higher authority. I know many who, although not being even good cricketers, have that good, sound knowledge of the game that makes them quite competent to impart their knowledge to others. I would also strongly advise you to see all the best players and watch them most carefully. See them as often as you can, and if you can get near them whilst they are practising it will be far better, for then you can see better where the ball is pitched, and how it is played.

You know that it is essential to keep your left shoulder well forward, so as to enable you to play with a straight bat, you have also your own ideas how a ball is to be played; well, by watching carefully, you can learn a great deal, and always make it a rule to watch better players than yourself, for you will then always find something new to learn. Never have the opinion that you know enough, or that you are good enough, for if you do, there will surely come a time, no matter how good you become, when you will admit how wrong you were. I know from experience what a great deal of batting one can learn from watching other batsmen, and if a young player is sufficiently observant, I know of no way by which he

can learn so quickly ; of course he must always practise most diligently.

I would strongly advise young players not to practise too long at a time ; by this I mean do not continue your batting practice after you feel the least bit tired ; for if you do, it will do you more harm than good ; it will be far better for you to stop at once, for if you continue, you do not make your strokes in the same way at all, and it may get you into a very slovenly style of batting. I have always made it a rule, directly I feel myself tiring, to stop at once. I think with two balls being bowled, ten minutes at a time is quite long enough. You can do quite enough during those ten minutes and you will be all the more eager to have another ten minutes later on in the day.

I know there are some writers who think that the greatest essential to the making of a good batsman is a good wicket. I do not quite agree with this view, although I think it is desirable to have a good wicket for a young beginner at the commencement, and then only for the reason that he may not get timid at the ball getting up and perhaps getting a knock or two. A good wicket is no doubt very pleasant and nice, and with the ball coming along a good pace and true, how easy it all seems, but I think it has a great tendency to make the player play at the pitch of the ball instead of watching it, as he should do. Very often have I seen public school boys batting, and nearly all had the same failing ; and when one has seen one who has watched the ball in the proper way, the remark has been made, pointing him out above his fellows, as the makings of a good bat, on account of his having watched the ball so. How different it all is after playing on a good wicket, when the ball comes straight along, and then getting on to a wicket where the ball, to say the least of it, deviates a little from its straight course. It is all the same to young beginners or those who have been playing for years : the batsman cannot play at the pitch of the ball ; it has to be watched all the time, and then most carefully. I will

remember being on the Association Ground at Sydney in 1890, when the Melbourne Inter-Colonial team were visiting there, when they were practising preparatory to their match with New South Wales. The wickets had been very good, the ball not doing anything and the batting all excellent; the team then were put on to a wicket that was worn, and then there was a change. I cannot forget the remark of one of the batsmen after he had finished his practice, and it was to this effect: "Why, I could not bat a bit—the ball was coming all ways. You know, we never have that kind of thing over in Victoria." That was another instance of the effect of good wickets, and batsmen playing at the pitch of the ball. My advice to the beginner is not to take too much notice of the state of the wicket. If it is a good one, well and good, but if it is such a one that the ball breaks about, do not take any notice of it, but watch the ball well and try and play it to the best of your ability, and you will quickly fall into the way of watching the ball that is so very necessary for every batsman to do.

It is very important for the beginner to use a bat that is in every way suited to him. By this I mean as to the weight and length, for it will do you no end of harm to use a bat that is too heavy or too long for you, and will be the means of tiring you very quickly and giving you a style that you may never get rid of. Now, when you can get any kind of bat made for you, there can be no excuse, so the first thing to do is to find out the weight and length most suitable to you and get the bat made, then you are in the position to make a commencement in the right direction. Should you use a bat that is too heavy for you, it will make you slow in playing the ball, in your timing, and the greatest difference will be found in your cutting, whilst the effect on your wrists may be felt for many years afterwards.

It is hard to tell correctly the proper length of the bat to be used, and I think it would be the best for the player to determine that himself, for he can best tell by taking a

bat in his hand and playing a stroke or two forward and then back, taking particular care to observe that he is playing perfectly straight; he will feel naturally which is the correct length for him to use. You must also take particular care in holding the handle of the bat, and never allow the right hand to be below the centre of the handle, for if you do, and allow the hands to be near the shoulder of the bat, it will make you stoop, which avoid as much as you can, and you cannot have that command of the ball that you will have by having a more upright position. I would recommend you to have your right hand above the middle of the handle, your left hand then naturally goes above it, and you will quickly find that in that position you can use your bat with the best effect and freedom, both in making your strokes or defending your wicket. Again, it will enable you to stand more upright and so to attain a much more natural and graceful style, for all those players who ever held the bat with the right hand below the centre of the handle gave the impression, and looked to be, batting in a very cramped way indeed. If you will notice other players holding the bat, you will soon learn the correct way; or, better still, get some qualified person to show you the proper way, and then it will become very easy. I am firmly convinced that there is more learnt of the game of cricket by the player being able to see practical illustrations than by studying all the books ever written.

Another point, and a most important one for you to learn, is to stand at the wicket correctly. The mere fact of a batsman taking his guard is, I think, a precaution to prevent his standing in front of the wicket, and also it tells him exactly his position. The guards generally taken by batsmen are centre, centre and leg, and leg stump. One never sees anyone take a guard to the off, for this would tend to make you bend further over the wicket, and not only would you be more apt to get your legs in front, but you would lose a certain amount of power at the same time. You must, therefore, take particular notice of the position of your feet

and always bear in mind to stand as naturally as you possibly can; do not let it be strained in any way. Have the right foot just inside the crease, and if you allow yourself an inch, it will at times be most beneficial, for, when playing forward, there are times when the right foot is dragged ever so little, and that very small space you have allowed yourself makes all the difference between staying on and perhaps enjoying a long innings and returning, most likely, very disconsolate to the pavilion. You must be quite certain that the toes of your right foot are not in front of the wicket; get them as close as you can, but always be sure they are clear of the leg wicket. Standing so close to the crease with your right foot, your left one you will find, as a matter of course, outside the crease, which is the proper place for it, and if you are standing, as you should be, in a natural position, you will not find the least difficulty in moving to play either forward or back, whichever you may be called upon to do. Do not forget it is very essential also to have your left foot from before the wicket, and although you can move it out of danger much more quickly than the right foot, it is a very dangerous and bad habit to get into. I know a good many players who have this bad habit, and in one or two cases the players do it so badly that they cover the whole wicket. This, no doubt, may worry a bowler a little, but he has only to hit that leg with the ball and the result is the always unsatisfactory one of leg before wicket. It is simply a bad habit and the player doing it runs a risk which is quite unnecessary.

On the other hand, you must not make the mistake of standing too far away from the leg wicket, for by doing so you lay yourself open to be bowled off your pads, and you are also necessarily farther away from the line between the wickets. I think it is a very important point in batting to be able to get your eyes as near as possible to the direct line from wicket to wicket, for it enables you to judge more correctly the straightness of the ball and, in fact, all the ball is likely to do.

I think the proper place for you to take your block is just

in a line with your right foot, for by doing so, I find you can stand far more naturally and upright than by having it nearer to the wicket; and again, you do not have to go through the same movement before playing the ball. I think it is a very good plan, after taking your block, to ask the umpire if your feet are clear; you will then know exactly your position, and any time whilst you are batting and have the least doubt, always get the umpire to tell you, for it is far better to be sure than sorry. I know from experience what an uncomfortable feeling it is to think that you are working your right foot in front of the wicket, and when you are satisfied that your foot is all right it enables you to play with much more confidence.

The time has now come for you to play the ball, and as the bowler commences his run to bowl the ball you have your bat grounded in the block hole, but how few batsmen keep it there until the ball has left the bowler's hand and is in the air. It seems to me that instinctively the batsman, directly the bowler starts to bowl, takes the bat out of the block hole with the intention of being quite ready to play at once, and this has often made me consider whether or no the taking block is any benefit other than enabling you to get into your proper position with your feet and to tell you how you are standing. I know there are many who keep their bats in the block hole until the last moment, but the majority raise the bat out, and by doing so I think it is an advantage, for it enables you to stand upright and take full advantage of your height. I do not wish you to think that I recommend you to pick the bat up and flourish it about, for that is a thing to be most carefully avoided, for it does no possible good and makes you lose very valuable time.

When you are ready to receive the ball, you may have been told to stand in a certain way, perhaps with your weight balanced in a particular manner. I think there can be no doubt about the correct way, and it is that the weight is always, and should be, upon the right leg. You can easily



prove what I say by taking a bat in your hands and taking your stand at an imaginary wicket, do not put any extra weight on the right leg or try to divide it equally, but take your stand in the proper way as if you were going to play a ball, and you will find that there is a little extra weight naturally put upon the right leg by virtue of the way you are standing. I am certain this is the right way, and especially so as the right leg is a certain kind of pivot from which you do all your batting. You will also notice what a difference it makes to your power in batting should you bend your right knee even in the slightest degree, and it will always be advisable to avoid doing so.

The moving of the feet in batting is, to my mind, one of the very greatest essentials to the making of really good batsmen, and until the ball has left the bowler's hand, the batsman cannot tell how he has to use his feet by playing forward or back. I have seen it laid down and recommended that a beginner's right foot should be pegged down until he acquires ease and confidence in playing back and forward. The author of this I have the greatest regard for and no one values his opinion more highly than I do, but I must really be allowed to join issue with him upon the desirability of pegging down the right foot when a player has to play back, and especially a beginner. I wonder whether he has ever tried it. I have, and found it most awkward and it did not answer at all. I know there are hundreds as well as myself who have often wished that that same author's foot had been pegged down on many, many occasions. No, I think the feet play very important parts in batting, and both of them should have the greatest scope possible. I advise all players to learn to use their feet quickly and well, and it will be the means of getting you out of many a difficulty. By being able to get to a ball quickly you make it an easy one, where if you had remained in your crouch you would have found it a most difficult one to stop. Once you get into the way of doing this you will never move the right foot unless you require to do so to make your stroke.

In all forward play it is absolutely necessary for you to keep the right foot well upon the ground.

The chief effort of all learning to bat should be towards attaining a good defence so that you may have plenty of confidence in yourself to keep up your wicket, for, without this art, no one can become a really good batsman. Always have this in view and be sure to devote plenty of patience and practice towards attaining the necessary end. During the time you are doing so you will find plenty of opportunities for making a great many of the strokes that have to be made. Strive to get a good sound defence of your wicket, and having this, you are sure to obtain plenty of runs. There are plenty of players, who, not having a good defence, go in for hitting, and sometimes are very successful, but more often they fail, and it is the batsman with the good sound defence that is looked to to keep up his wicket and who can be depended upon for runs.

You must be able to play well both forward and back, for if you are not strong at both kinds of play there will always be a weakness in your defence, which a bowler is sure to notice and take advantage of. You must, therefore, try and perfect yourself equally in both styles of playing, never forgetting for one moment to always play with a perfectly straight bat, keeping your shoulder well forward all the time. Always put power into your stroke, and make a point of making your bat play the ball—not allowing the ball to play the bat. I think the far stronger defence is the back play; for then a player is watching and has sight of the ball all the time, and can see the break quickly and well, and is quite prepared to meet it. The back play is quite the safest when the wicket is such a one that a bowler can cause the ball to break; for it is on this class of wicket that the greatest amount of care has to be exercised, and it is not at all safe to play forward. In fact, it is one of the chief aims of the bowler to induce the batsman to play forward, and as long as he can do so he is almost certain to very quickly improve his analysis at your expense.

I think all batsmen have a tendency to play forward, and especially so when they first go in. There seems to me a certain kind of the loadstone and needle attraction between the bowler's arm and yourself; for I have noticed a very great number of the best batsmen of the day commencing, as it were, to play forward at the first ball before ever it left the bowler's hand—and not only commencing, but playing the stroke out at a ball that, had they been in for two or three overs, they would have played back to. You will naturally see how dangerous this is upon a bowler's wicket, and the inclination or attraction to play forward when you first go in cannot be too strongly resisted. Of course, on a really good wicket, the danger is not nearly so great. I have heard a great many players express their opinion that, upon certain wickets, a batsman should either play back or hit, and not attempt to play forward, and would advise you to carry this out. There are very few players who can adapt their play to the different kinds of wickets they play on; and whilst most players can play back, they will not alter their game to the extent of hitting a ball they think should be played forward in the orthodox way. On a wicket that is sticky and drying, this is a mistake, and it will be much better for you to follow the above advice.

To master the back play you require to be as watchful as ever you can be; for your success depends upon your straight bat, your watchfulness and your quickness of eye, so as to be in a position to meet the break of the ball, or in case it should get off the pitch quicker than you anticipate. May be it will bump up, and, should this occur, it requires both quickness and judgment to see whether the ball will bump too high to hit the wicket. If, in your opinion, this is so, it is advisable to let it go, and not attempt to play it at all. Do not grip the handle of your bat in any strained way, but hold it firmly, and you will notice that the strain is mostly with the right hand. Have the top of the handle slightly pointed towards the bowler. At the present time, when all the

grounds are so good, a batsman hardly ever thinks of having to play a shooter; and if he does happen to get one, he must be in very good form or extremely lucky to stop it; and yet it will not do to quite forget there is such a ball bowled now and again, and the correct play is to put your bat down as quickly as over you can.

In using the back play there has been a growing tendency of late years for batsmen to put their legs in front of their wicket, and, should they not play the ball with the bat, it is stopped with the legs. This, of course, is only done in the case of a breaking ball which has not pitched in a straight line with the wicket. A batsman has every right to use all legitimate means to keep up his wicket; but I think it was never meant to be carried to such extremes as is now done, and I would strongly urge you not to adopt this style; for if you do, it will be only a question of time when you will have to pay the penalty, besides getting into a very bad habit indeed. Of course, there are exceptions to every rule, and to my mind there is one to this also; and it happens when a ball is pitched just outside the leg stump, being then necessarily in a straight line with your legs. It is then quite excusable, and, in my opinion, very good play, to move in front of your middle and leg wickets, for it enables you to place or glance the ball to leg much more effectively than by standing in your original position.

Back play is, no doubt, chiefly used for the purposes of defence, as there are not nearly so many strokes by which you can score as at forward play; and I am firmly convinced that the correct way of playing back to a ball is to move your right foot when the occasion requires it. I know there are many times when the batsman can play the ball back without having occasion to move his right foot; but, in the majority of cases, my experience has been that, by moving the right foot as much or as little as judgment dictates, the stroke is made with far more ease than by having your right foot a fixture. If you will take the trouble to notice all players, you will see

for yourself that in almost every case when they are playing back the right foot is always moved. And, again, you will find you have far more command and power over the ball, and especially so over a rising one, and you can finish your stroke in a far safer way. I remember a player who was one of the few first-class players who was greatly in the habit of allowing the ball to play the bat when playing back, and even then he invariably moved the right foot, and one would think there would not be the slightest need for him to do so in playing in that way.

There is no need for you to fear treading down your wicket, and in proof of this, you will find the exceptions form the rule, for how seldom do you read of or see a batsman out in that way?

In playing back it seems more natural to move your right foot, and in making the stroke you instinctively move the foot the necessary distance and no more. I have seen some play back and move the right foot so much back that when they have finished the stroke both their feet have been within three or four inches of the wicket.

My advice to you is to move the right foot when, in your judgment, the occasion requires it; if you find you can play the ball with ease by not moving it, well and good; but should you at any time think you could play the ball better by getting back a little, why do so, and you will find it will give you a particle more time and enable you to make things very much easier.

I think the art of boxing very applicable to forward and back play of cricket, for whilst boxing is nearly all forward strokes, there are many times when a boxer has to get back, and he generally finds what a great difference there is in receiving a hit whilst standing principally on his right foot, and when he has moved it a few inches in getting back. So it is with your back play at cricket, the velocity of the ball is not so great two feet back from your crease as it is right on it. The advantage of time is no doubt momentary, but still it is

an advantage, and one that I have proved and seen to be very beneficial.

There are very few strokes by which the player gets runs by playing back, and it is principally through placing the ball on the leg side, or glancing it to leg, that he is enabled to score. There is the back cut, but it is a very dangerous stroke, especially so on slow wickets. Even on good wickets you want to time the ball well and exercise your wrists. To play this stroke, put your right foot well across towards the off-stump, in fact you will find it a little outside, and holding your bat well over the ball, make your stroke sharply and quickly, using your wrists for the purpose of placing the ball out of the reach of the fieldsmen—always be sure that the ball is well outside the off-wicket, for it is a most dangerous and foolish stroke to try and cut a ball which is on the off-wicket. There are a few players who get runs by playing back, but they have to play the stroke very vigorously, and when they play so hard upon every ball, although it looks very attractive, a lot of energy is wasted, and it must tire their arms and wrists, and I think that should be avoided at all times.

Forward play is much more attractive, both to players and onlookers, this being, no doubt, on account of the great variety of strokes and ones that are much more pleasing to the eye. The majority of batsmen are much stronger in forward play than back; why this should be so it is very hard to say, although I am sure there is the general tendency to move towards the object, the bowler with the ball, that is coming towards you.

As I do not hold with the keeping your right foot firmly fixed on the ground in back play, you might ask am I to move it in playing forward? No, certainly not; you must not move it; you must always remember to have it firmly fixed and not allow yourself to drag it in any way; should you do so, being so near the crease, you will either have it outside or on the crease line, and in either case, in the event of your not play-

ing the ball, and it missing the wicket, you will fall a victim to the ever-ready wicket-keeper. It is an advantage, therefore, to take your stand with the right foot two or three inches inside the crease, and in case you should over-reach yourself, that short distance may be the means of saving your wicket.

In playing forward you always move your left leg forward in the direction of the pitch of the ball, and in playing so, your judgment of the flight and pitch guides you as to the distance you must reach forward. By putting your left foot in the direction of the pitch of the ball, you will find that the bat is very close to the left leg. It is very advisable that it should be so, for the ball may break sufficiently to miss the bat, and were your leg not in the way it might find its way to the wicket. But you must always remember not to allow your left foot to get in advance of your bat, as the ball hitting your leg first would most likely be fatal. It is a good plan to have your bat on a level with your left foot, always remembering how necessary it is to have the left shoulder well forward, with the handle of your bat pointing a little slantingly towards the bowler. This will cause you to play the ball down; whereas, if you held your bat with blade more pointed towards the ball, it would cause the ball, after you had played it, to go up in the air.

As in back play, so it is in forward play, you do it principally to defend your wicket, and yet there are some players who play the forward stroke so strongly and vigorously that, although they are playing the stroke in a strictly defensive way, they frequently obtain runs at the same time. This hard kind of play wants plenty of practice and strong wrists, and, although it looks attractive and stylish, I think the extra amount of strength that is put in the playing of nearly every ball in this manner may be utilised in a much better way in reserving your forces for the ball off which you can score. And then again, there is always the risk of the ball kicking, and should it do so, you are far more likely to

put it into the hands of a fieldsman than if you were making your stroke in a less quick manner.

In forward play what a lot of things there are to be considered, and what a short space of time is given you to make up your mind as to what you intend to do. You see the ball delivered from the bowler's hand, then comes the flight through the air, and the time for you to form your judgment as to where it is going to pitch and whether you have to play back or forward. And now comes the time for one of the greatest essentials in all forward play, and that is timing; and one of the chief attributes to your success will be your observing the nature of the wicket you are batting upon, so as to see what pace the ball is coming off the pitch. If the wicket is a good fast one, then you can play and carry out your stroke much more freely than when the wicket is slow, for according to the pace of the wicket you must regulate the pace of your own stroke. There are different points at which the ball is played after it leaves the pitch, and there can be no doubt they are regarded, not in any orthodox way, but simply by the manner in which each individual batsman judges the ball he plays forward to.

On all wickets where the bowler is able to get any break on the ball, I would strongly recommend you in playing the forward stroke to get to and over the ball, and as near its pitch as you possibly can, for by doing so you will give it the less opportunity of breaking, for the greater distance your bat is away the greater chance it has of breaking past and doing what the bowler intends. In making this stroke you want to do it quickly, and especially so on a quick wicket that has been worn, for then it is that the ball breaks much more quickly, and is far more dangerous than at any other time. On a wicket where the ball breaks slowly you have a little more time to watch it off the pitch, but do not make the mistake of playing at the pitch. You will, of course, in making this stroke play much more slowly, so as to time it well, for should you play too quickly you will send the ball in the air.



You will find that the distance you have to reach forward to enable you to play is entirely decided by your judgment of the flight and pitch of the ball, and that your left foot will move instinctively the correct distance; but then there is the chance of your judgment being wrong, and you find yourself a little short of the necessary distance. When that occurs there can be no doubt it is a case of getting out of it the best way you can; and to do this, I have found it a very good plan to try and time the ball off the pitch and play the stroke by putting your bat straight down to the ground.

On fast and true wickets it is a very easy thing to play forward, and this kind of play is nearly always adopted by batsmen. You must not make the mistake of thinking you can do so to every ball that is bowled, or letting it cause you to be less watchful; for the bowler, not being able to get any break on the ball, has to fall back upon trying to deceive you with the pitch and pace. On this class of wicket you can nearly always play forward to any good length ball that is bowled, but always bear in mind that no matter what wicket you are on you want to regulate the pace of your stroke to the pace of the ball, for you would not naturally play with the same quickness to a medium-paced bowler as you would to one who was bowling very fast. There was one very fast bowler whom you had to play most quickly at; I refer to Crossland, of Lancashire. I shall never forget the first time I played against him; I had heard a great deal about his pace, and was therefore ready to play forward quickly, but the ball was pitched a little short, and I, in my innocence, played back, or rather attempted to, for, before I had nearly finished my stroke, one of my wickets was sent flying down where, in the olden days, the long stop would have fielded it. Ever after that I was a strong advocate for playing fast bowling very quickly, and on good wickets mostly forward.

Upon coming off slow wickets to fast ones you must be careful to quicken up your strokes, for I have often seen batsmen get out simply through not playing the stroke quick enough.

On a good wet wicket, as long as the ball is cutting through and coming along fast and true, it is advisable to play a good deal forward, as on a hard good wicket, but the ball will keep lower and cause you to be more careful, for there will not be the same uniformity of pace, as one may come off the pitch very much quicker than another.

There are many times that a batsman makes the mistake of going forward when he should have played back, and vice versa, and this may be caused in various ways, the chief one being by the bowler deceiving you in the flight of the ball. Your eyesight may not be in proper trim, or there may be some building or tree behind the bowler's arm which, no doubt, causes this mistake to be made, and when made you invariably pay the penalty; there is no time for you to remedy it. You think the ball is not so far up as it really is, and playing back, it is past before you get down on it.

Then, again, there is the being caught in two minds, that is, doubting as to whether to play forward or back. The doubt is only momentary, but what a lot of trouble it causes. I think every cricketer has experienced the not at all nice sensation, and I think it generally happens when you are in the act of going forward to play a ball. You see the ball in its flight from the bowler's hand, and think you can play it forward, and as you take the necessary step with your left foot you find it is not so far up as you think; then it is the doubt arises as to whether to continue on with your stroke or get back to play it. When I have found myself in this plight I have always played a stroke Charles Bannerman, of Australia, used to invariably get out of the difficulty with, and in the following way—you think the ball should be played forward, and as you are in the middle of taking the step to do so, the doubt arises; continue on with the step, then bring the right foot close up to the left, and, timing the ball off the pitch, bring your bat down quickly, when you will find it grounded on a level, or nearly so, with your right foot. Objection may be taken to your having to take your right foot

out of the crease, but my experience has been that there is no risk, and you are able to play the ball with safety and ease. It is just a sharp one, two, three, the left foot advanced and put down, the right foot quickly drawn up to it, and then the bat put down.

Whenever and as long as you are batting I advise you most strongly that directly the bowler starts his run preparatory to delivering the ball never take your eyes off the hand holding the ball. There are lots of players who look at the bowler himself, and do not devote any particular attention to anything until the ball leaves the bowler's hand—by looking at the bowler you notice, as a matter of course, all that he is doing generally. You will by that means notice whether or not he delivers the ball with the first foot over the bowling crease, or whether, as in the case of a few bowlers, they deliver the ball with both feet behind the crease, the effect of doing the latter would necessarily make the ball longer in its flight. They do not do this only as a variation, and when done, unless noticed, is very apt to deceive you. Why I want you to always look at the hand holding the ball is that you may learn to know what the bowler is trying to do with the ball—whether he is trying to make it break from the off or leg side, or whether he intends to bowl a straight ball. To cause a ball to break, it has to be held with the fingers in a certain way, and by constantly watching the fingers, you will get into the way of telling which way the ball will break, that is if it does what the bowler intends and wishes it to do.

Some bowlers' hands are, of course, much easier to watch than others, but you must always endeavour to get a good look at them, and you will be always prepared. It makes the ball so much easier when you see it do what you expect, than when it breaks in a way totally unexpected. Sometimes the way it breaks is not quite known to the bowler himself; he knows he holds the ball in a particular way, and he sees it break without his trying to do so. I know one bowler who

does this, and with this particular kind of ball he obtains a great many wickets.

Do not forget this, and you cannot begin too early in getting yourself well into the way of doing it; you will find it no trouble, and soon find out what a very great assistance it will be to you.

Having learnt to play forward and back correctly and in the position to be able to defend and keep up your wicket, you now want to turn your attention to being able to take full advantage of and score off the bowling whenever the opportunity may arise. A layman might think it was a very easy thing to hit a ball, and so score; he would be quite right, maybe, as far as the hitting is concerned, but unless you have a good idea as to the exact spot you will hit the ball, there is every chance of it going direct to a fieldsman; so not only must you learn to hit the ball, but you must also learn the art of placing it between the fieldsmen; for unless you can do so, you will find it very hard indeed to get runs. It takes a long time, plenty of practice and perseverance, with heaps of patience, before you have that command over the bat which enables you to very nearly place the ball as is absolutely necessary to steer it clear of the fieldsmen. I say very nearly, for I cannot think of anyone who has attained the high position of being able to place the ball exactly where he wishes. How often does one try and think as he plays the ball that he is doing so, only to find that he has failed. We see lots of players more perfect than others, and for this I cannot assign a reason. The wrists and timing the ball have a great deal to do with your placing correctly, and there is no doubt that good timing is the principal ingredient in good batting. To my mind timing is the working in perfect unison of the hands, arms, legs and all the necessary muscles which are subservient to the eye, in making the particular stroke desired. The eye is the principal factor, and to be able to obtain that unison which is absolutely necessary, you must take all the practice it is possible for you to have.

I think Lord Frederick Beauclerk must have had all the attributes of a good timist, for in his day, and when the grounds were not nearly so perfect and good as at the present time, it is written of him in Lord Charles J. F. Russell's "Recollections of Cricket," as if it were an exception at that time, that he had a greater variety of hits than anyone else and they were all along the ground. This, no doubt, was caused by his perfect timing, for it is nothing else that causes you to play the ball safely along the ground.

There is an old saying that if you keep up your wicket the runs will come, and it is a very true one, but still you want to know the different kinds of strokes and also be able to make them.

How very seldom a player is seen who can be called a really first-class leg hitter, and this is caused by the few opportunities that are given a batsman of making the stroke, for the bowling has got so accurate that, when a bowler does make a mistake and pitch a ball which should be hit to leg, it escapes simply on account of the want of practice of the batsman. I have often noticed how well players, when practising at the commencement of the season, make the stroke, and a short time afterwards, in matches, miss many fine opportunities. I have often tried to account for this, but cannot. Should you get a half-volley on your legs you can make a fair hit at it and try to hit it to deep square leg, making sure not to hit too quickly; for, if you do, the ball might catch the back of your bat, or the edge, and go up in the air. If the half-volley is between your legs and the leg stump, you should play that along the ground, between mid-on and the umpire, or short-leg, if there is one. Then there is the ball that may be a good length or a little short, and to hit this effectively you want to put your left leg forward and hit with a horizontal bat. A ball pitched very short on the wicket should always be hit to the on side, and you can do this most effectively by moving your right foot a little back and across your wicket—this will give you more power to place the ball where you want to.



LEG PLAY.



You can also make the hit very well by moving your left leg a little in advance. By simply playing to leg you will require to draw your left foot back to the right one.

To drive a ball you must get well to it, and also have your bat straight and well over it; by doing this, and timing well, you will always keep the ball down. In making this stroke, do not be afraid to use your feet, for it is often good play to go out of your crease to drive the ball, only you must be sure to get well to it and not go a little way, then stop and play forward at it. I have often seen this done, and it is simply through want of confidence.

The sweetest stroke of the whole game is, without doubt, the cut, and yet it is made with far less frequency nowadays than it was a few years ago, and yet the bowling at the present time is far more to the off side than it was then. The reason for this is that the bowlers are far more accurate in their pitch, and, again, they have so many fieldsmen on the off side that it is extremely difficult to get the ball through them. It is to the off theory state of the game, adopted so much by the bowlers of the present day, that not only is the falling off of the cutting attributable, but this is answerable, to a very great degree, for the so-called slowness of the game on very many occasions, and principally so on good wickets. The bowler knows he cannot get any break on the ball, so he places all the fieldsmen on the off side, keeps a good length, and bowls outside the off stump. Then it is that one sees so many balls allowed to pass without any attempt made to even play at them. Many times the cut is made, but how often is it not so much waste of energy?

To cut well, you must be able to time the ball well, for the effectiveness of the stroke is entirely due to your proper timing and your wrist work, for you need to use your wrists more in making this stroke than in any other.

There are many points at which the stroke is actually made; what I mean by this is, the distance the ball is away from the off stump, and the distance is governed by the pitch and pace



of the ball, and the position you wish the ball to go; this particularly applies when you are cutting behind the wicket. To do this, you must move the right foot across, towards the off stump, the distance being governed entirely by how far the ball is wide of the off wicket, always bearing in mind not to over-reach yourself. You must then bring the bat down sharply, hitting a little over the ball, and use your wrists all you can in the act of making the stroke, which is generally made when the ball is in front of the off wicket, although I have seen it done when the ball has passed the wicket. When you are making the stroke, put plenty of power into it, and don't make the mistake of simply patting the ball, for by doing so you are risking your wicket without the chance of reward.

The forward cut is, I think, far more generally made, and, when made, the ball goes between a point square with the wicket and cover point. To do this effectively you will want to be far more perfect in your timing than in the back cut, and require to put your left foot across; do not move your right, but let it act as a pivot, and according to the exact position you want the ball to go you must keep it firm or turn it accordingly, as when it is cut towards cover-point the foot will not turn, but you will find it will do so naturally should you wish the ball to go slightly in front of point or square with the wicket. By putting your left foot across, you have far more command over the ball and can put far more power into your stroke. Never cut at the pitch of the ball, for this is a very dangerous stroke and especially so with a bowler who is bowling on the off theory, for it is one the bowler will always try and make you do. Always bear in mind to get your bat sufficiently over the ball to enable you to cause it to hit the ground a short distance away from you.

There are lots of players who dearly like to have a good hit and I must confess it must be a very pleasing sensation, after going out and meeting the ball fairly with the centre of your bat, to see it sailing away over the boundary or perhaps out of

the ground. I have seen both friends and foes do it on many occasions, but must say that such a thing has never happened to me.

To all cricketers, when they go out of their ground to hit a ball, my advice is to forget that there is such a thing as a wicket-keeper in the game, for should you have him in your mind, you are very likely to make a mistake. You must always get well to the ball, for if you are hitting upon a wicket upon which it is breaking, the greater distance you are away from it the more chance you have of missing it. A hitter generally hits at the pitch of a ball, and, although it is not the correct thing to do, how very successful they very often are. The most dangerous ball to hit at is the one that is breaking away from you all the time, for should you give it the least time to break, your chances of losing your wicket are greatly increased. The ball that is breaking to you all the time is the one principally picked out, and I must say rightly so, for you have a far greater chance of hitting it or snicking it than any other.

There are what is known as firm-footed hitters; not many are blessed with this gift, and it gives them the advantage of not having to fear or run the risk of being stumped, for they, in making all the hitting strokes, never move their right foot at all, simply advancing the left foot, as if they were playing forward. Any one who has seen Ernest Smith, J. J. Lyons and Percy McDonnell, will have seen this particular class of hitting to perfection.

What a number of batsmen there are who cannot play underhand slow bowling, and this is attributable chiefly to not being able to use the foot quickly, also that it is the exception for players to have any practice in this particular kind of bowling. If at the nets a bowler commences to bowl lobbs, what a fuss is generally made and how quickly he is stopped; the result is that, not having any practice at all, upon the first time they are encountered in a match the batsman has no idea how they should be played. He may not

get out off them, but how plainly he shows his inability to play them correctly.

To play lobs successfully you want to be able to use your feet quickly in getting out to the ball. Never allow a lob-bowler to make you play a regular forward stroke, always get well to the ball and hit it before it touches the ground or immediately upon its doing so; should you find you cannot get right out, watch it and play it back. Never think too lightly of this class of bowling, for although it is the opinion of nearly all batsmen that lobs are easy and can and should be played with the proverbial broom-handle, how often we see a good number not able to play them with the full-sized regulation bat. No matter how well you can play them, don't try and hit every one for four; I think it by far the better plan to be content with two or a single. Never forget to use your feet.

The strokes I have set out must be practised with every care, attention and perseverance, and get as much practice as you possibly can, for it is indeed true at cricket that practice makes perfect. As I pointed out before, you will learn a very great deal and get many useful hints by watching good players as often as you can; the better the players the sounder the impressions which will be conveyed to you.

Batting itself is a game of attack and defence, and, to a certain extent, resolves itself into a duel between the bowler and the batsman, and one's knowledge and patience are pitted against the other's. The bowler is assisted by his fieldsmen, the ball and the wickets, whilst the batsman has his bat. It is, therefore, very necessary for the batsman to—when he first goes in—take a look round the field and always have it in his memory, so that when the ball arrives off which he expects to get runs, it will help him very much to place it properly. Always take notice when the fieldsmen are moved or altered at all, for many times during an over the wicket-keeper or the captain, by a sign, changes the position of a fieldsmen, and you must therefore always be alert, otherwise, by not noticing the



THE LATE CUT.



perhaps slight alteration, you may be taken at a disadvantage.

Never alter your style of batting. What I mean principally by this is that once having got into that style which has and will come naturally to you, do not make the mistake of altering it for the purpose of obtaining any particular style which you may think far more taking and effective than your own. Also do not alter the nature of the game you have accustomed yourself to play. It may be that from your beginning you have played a fine, free game: this will last you for many years; but there will come a time when you will, without any wish on your part, slow down very considerably. With a free batsman there is rarely ever the wish to have any alteration in his play; but that cannot be said of the slow or steady player. There are many, indeed, of this class of batsmen who have often wished they could play the free and forcing game that is so much admired; and some that I have personally known have attempted to make the alteration with very fatal results to themselves. From really good batsmen of the steady order—and they were not considered slow scorers by any means—they became unable to play either game properly. Percy McDonnell, of Australia, is the only batsman in my experience who changed his game successfully; for my early recollection of him was as a steady player. In altering his game, by adopting the free style of cricket, he sacrificed his chances of obtaining runs for one whole season. In his case the sacrifice was, indeed, worthy of the cause, as those thousands who have so often admired his beautiful style and play will admit.

There are times when the state of the wicket and force of circumstances will compel you to alter your game, but this is only for the time being. All those players who have ever been told by their captain to force the game, or had to do so by the badness of the wicket, well know, if they are not accustomed to that style of play, how extremely difficult it is to do so with effect. My advice, then, is to keep to your own par-

ticular style and game, and you will find it far more to your advantage and much better than trying to play a kind of game that will jeopardise the one you already have.

Another thing that it is advisable to bear in mind when batting is, after you have run any runs, be sure to regain your breath before playing the next ball. You will, of course, have to do this without delaying the game in any way; but taking a few moments is perfectly justifiable and quite necessary to enable you to play properly. There is no doubt in my mind that running affects your eyesight in a greater or lesser degree, according to the condition you are in; and should you take your stand and play at the ball when you have not regained your breath, your eyes will give a different conception of the flight, and perhaps be the means of your losing your wicket; and then, again, should the ball be one off which you hope to score, you cannot do justice to your stroke.

The better your condition, the less chance there is of your doing what boxers have generally to do, and what I have often heard batsmen express as sparring for wind. If you should care to go in for a system of training, it can only do good; for in every department of the game, the better condition you are in the better chances you have of doing yourself justice. Good condition means stamina, and you certainly want this to play a long innings; and, solely for the want of it, I have often seen batsmen get out. You certainly require it, should you have a day's outing in the field, especially so if you are a bowler; so my advice is to make it a rule to be as fit as possible.

Another great essential in the makings of a good batsman is to learn to be able to judge when to run. You cannot commence to learn too soon; for it is a very important factor in the game, and one upon which many, many games have been lost and won. It looks very easy indeed to run up and down the wicket, and especially so when two batsmen are in who are really good judges as to the proper time to run; but put with one of these a batsman who cannot judge well, and

then you will see how different it all appears. It is wonderful what runs really can be made by two good judges, who understand and have confidence in each other.

As a rule, you do not stand in the crease when you are at the bowler's end, but a little outside of it; you should then rest your bat on the ground, making sure it is in a line with the inside of the popping-crease; and as the bowler delivers the ball, walk—or, technically speaking, back-up—two or three yards; you will then have the advantage of being on the move, and will gain the distance you have advanced should you have to run. Always be sure never to get so far away from your wicket as will cause you any trouble to get back; also do not back up until the ball leaves the bowler's hand, otherwise you might be run out by the bowler. If the ball is hit behind the wicket, you will, generally, judge it. Make up your mind instantly, call at once and distinctly, and run. Whenever your partner calls you, either run at once, or, in the event of your not intending to run, say "No!" immediately.

All those balls hit in front of the wicket, the batsman who hits them is the proper person to judge them. Never hesitate in the slightest; for not only will you confuse yourself, but your partner; and, should you do so three or four times, it will be the means of his losing all confidence in you.

Should you be in with a really bad runner, it is always a good plan, and may save your wicket and also a match, for you to go to him and quietly ask him to allow you to judge all the runs. When you are running do not cross at all, but keep your own side, and always have your head up and your eyes about you; for I have seen a few players, directly the ball has been struck, lower their heads and run down the wicket as if there were no such thing as a hard cricket ball in the field. By doing this, not only may you collide with your partner, but the ball might be thrown at the wicket, and you, being in the way, would receive a nasty knock. If you possibly can, it is always as well to have a look at the ball.



When running into the crease, you will always have the bat in advance of you, and be quite certain to always ground it just before you come to the crease, and run with it along the ground until your feet are inside. By this means you will have your bat safe inside the crease long before you would should you run with it in the air, and by having it in the latter position you might be run out; for how often do we see what looks to be a very near thing—in fact, the batsman looking as if he had the bat well in—but when given “run out” it has been ascertained that, although the bat was really inside the crease, it was in the air and over the crease, but not grounded.

Also when you are running more than one run do not run with your feet into the crease; there is no need at all for this, for you should desire to save as much ground as you can, and to do this it will be sufficient for you to run as near to the crease as to enable you to put the bottom of the blade of your bat just inside the popping crease; you must be certain of doing so, otherwise you will be liable to make a short run. When running it is always advisable, as you are passing your partner, to give him some intimation as to whether or not there is another run, this is principally the case when his back is to the ball, for it will save him the momentary time of judging for himself as he is turning at the opposite crease. It is very pleasant indeed to make a short run, and the making of them no doubt pleases the onlookers very much; but do they pay the batsman for the making? I think not. To make them a risk is run, this in itself we all know has a certain charm about it; then, again, when frequently made, they have the effect of perhaps demoralising the field, but this is not often, as all good cricketers know that it is simply a question of time when the penalty will have to be paid. In making short runs they only count one at a time and what valuable wickets are lost in the attempt. Not only this, it takes a lot out of a batsman, for he has to be always moving and running at his top speed, and no matter how good his

condition may be, he will find it affect his wind, and consequently his batting.

You should always run for a catch, that is when the ball is hit in the air and appears likely to be caught; never mind how easy the catch seems, always run if, in your judgment, there is one, but do not do so should there be any chance of being run out if the catch is missed.

In batting, there is, as a rule, a great deal of good and bad luck, and whatever may come to you—for you are sure to have both—always take it in the same way and be just as bright and cheerful in your defeats as you are in your successes. Every batsman has reverses, and do what he will, cannot score; when this time comes, as it does to most, do not be disheartened, but be the more determined to succeed.

There are times when the batsman goes right off his form, and although he cannot feel any difference in himself and cannot account for it, he does not seem to be able to get a run. In this case I should recommend a week's rest away from the cricket-field entirely; it is the only plan I have ever found to be of use.

Every batsman is very keen to score every time he goes to the wicket, but everyone who has ever played the game has found how impossible this is. There are many, indeed, who score most consistently; to do this, you want to be both patient and careful. It is very unwise to go in thinking you will be able to get your score in about five minutes. Without you are very patient, you will not make long scores. Never relax your carefulness; no matter what number of runs you have made, always play as if you had to make fifty more.

In conclusion, let me again remind and advise you to pay the greatest attention to the teachings of your mentor, and try, to the best of your ability, to carry out the doctrines he wishes to inculcate you with, have all the practice you possibly can, always endeavouring to make your strokes correctly, and never lose an opportunity of observing really good players. Be in real earnest with the whole thing, and by exercising plenty

of patience and perseverance you will make rapid strides towards excelling in this branch of the game which, without doubt, is the most pleasant and best of all in the great game of cricket.

## FIELDING.

To this department of the game of cricket how few there are who give that strict attention which it undoubtedly requires. Fielding to all onlookers seems perfectly simple, very easy, and can be done without bothering very much about it. There are heaps of players who think the same, and who would never dream of taking every opportunity of improving or perfecting themselves, and who are convinced it can be done quite as a matter of course.

In this life of ours nature has bestowed upon bipeds, quadrupeds, etc., the gift of being able to catch and stop all kinds of things, and it is this gift that the cricketer applies when he is fielding, for there can be no doubt whatever that where one person has a natural idea of being able to bat properly and correctly, there are twenty who can go into a cricket-field and field the ball very well indeed. There being this natural aptitude, the player has only to gain experience; give it your best attention and perseverance, and, with plenty of practice, you will be certain to become a first-class fieldsman.

If you should be able to play in matches every day, you would then have the best of practice, and be gaining experience the whole time; but if you only can play for a couple of days and practise the rest, try to have some fielding whilst you are at the nets; you can easily make lots of fielding for yourself, and will derive great benefit from it.

Always bear in mind how necessary it is for you to become a good fieldsman, for upon it, many times, will depend your inclusion in a team, and very often you will be chosen in preference to a better batsman who fails in his fielding.

Do not make the mistake of always fielding in one place ; it may be very nice and very likely much easier to be always in the same place ; but you would get into a way that would make you feel uncomfortable and totally unfit for any other position. When you are learning, try and field one day at one place and one day at another, you will then get into a way of feeling never out of place and be able to fill any position. To do this you will no doubt have a great deal of work ; but the result will repay you. You will also require to be very active, have plenty of dash, and be able to throw well, for this latter is very essential when you are out in the long-field. No person who cannot throw well and fast ought ever to go out in the long-field, for the batsmen very quickly indeed notice the defect, and invariably run when otherwise they would not think of doing so.

There is a great deal of judgment required all the time you are fielding, and the greater knowledge you have of the game the quicker you will be able to judge the correct thing to do.

You must be on the watch from the moment the bowler takes the ball in his hand ; you will then see the ball pitched, and while your eyes are following its course you will see the batsman shape and be able to judge whether he will play forward, back, or go for a hit, this will help you immensely and enable you to start and get to the ball in a very much quicker way than you otherwise would. You know by the stroke where the ball should go, and so you anticipate a little. This, of course, only applies to the fieldsmen in front of the wicket, for on no account should anyone fielding in the slips move about, they should get their proper position and keep it ; the ball goes to them so quickly and at such awkward angles that they have no time to think about where it should or should not go. I have very frequently seen catches missed there simply through the moving with the idea of anticipating ever so little the spot where it was thought the ball would come.

As the ball is struck, you, at the same time, judge it

there is a chance of a run, and according to its pace so you will need to dash in to field it. If it is hit straight at you, and hard, you will generally not move much, if at all, and it will be a good plan for you to close your legs.

Another very good thing for you to remember is, never to field any ball with one hand when you could do so with two, and the same thing applies to catching. I think it is inexcusable for anyone to try and make a catch with one hand when he could just as easily make it with the two. Yet we see it done nearly every day, and the remark, when given, generally is—"Oh, I thought I could not miss it." Making catches with the one hand looks very pretty, but they are often missed, and knowing what great differences the missing a catch sometimes makes in a game, every fieldsman should remember that it is far better to be sure than sorry.

The advantage of being able to throw well is a great one indeed, and when done correctly adds greatly to the value of the fieldsman who can field the ball with dash and certainty. It is, indeed, the exception to find a cricketer who cannot throw; but how many of them can return the ball to the wicket with that rapidity and accuracy which is required to run the batsman out. It is very essential for the beginner to learn to return the ball well; do not stop to take aim and do not throw over, for by doing so you will necessarily go through an action which loses lots of time. What you have to try and learn is to pick the ball up and return it in the one action, and when you are throwing, keep your arm as nearly in a line with your shoulder as you can, you will thus cultivate a quick return and be able to return the ball with great speed and without any unnecessary force or labour. This principally applies to fieldsmen near the wicket, for, as a rule, out-fields being too far away, have to exercise much more force and power in getting the ball to the wickets and generally throw over, when, as a rule, the ball reaches the wicket on the first bound.

When fielding near the wicket make a practice of throwing

about a foot above the wickets, for then the person receiving the ball is enabled to get the bails off without the slightest loss of time. It is a good plan to take advantage of the interval when a man is out, to practise a little with the wicket-keeper, if you only do it half a dozen times, on two or three occasions during the time you are fielding, you will be surprised at the improvement you will make, and how soon you will be able to throw with the greatest accuracy.

You must always bear in mind that it is necessary to back up a fieldsman who is fielding the ball close to you, for should he miss it or fumble it, you will be ready, and may not only save four runs but be in a position to cause a run-out. Al-o, when the ball is thrown in to the bowler or wicket-keeper, ever be ready to back up, not getting too near to either.

Catching well is a very important factor in good fielding, and one cannot practise it too much. I have often heard it remarked that if all the chances were taken, the side doing so would win, and my experience has taught me that in nine cases out of ten, it is strictly true, but it is, indeed, the exception for all the chances to be taken. I think it is a well-recognised fact among all cricketers, that no matter how excellent a fieldsman is or how sure he may be, the well-known remark of—they all miss them, has been applied to him on some occasion. I have seen many very good ground fields who were no good at all at a catch, and why this should be so it is hard to say. There are many catches that to miss is quite excusable, but we often see plenty of others where no excuse can be offered. I think the hardest of all is the one hit in the air, and for which you have to wait; it looks so easy, and no doubt is, and should be caught, so every one thinks, as a matter of course, and when missed, no one, not even the fieldsman himself, knows how it has been done, and as he hears a kind of wondering roar from the crowd, I am sure he is not helped out of his difficulty. It is, therefore, necessary for you to pay a good deal of attention to your catching, and it is advisable to have as much practice as you can get. You

can always get this when in the field. It is the best of practice to get a player at the nets to hit the ball out to you, for it then comes to you in quite a different way to when thrown.

Always make it a rule to try for a catch, you will never know what you can get to until you try, and it is far better to lose four runs in the attempt than not to try. Do not make the mistake of closing your fingers until the ball is in your hand, for this means missing the catch and very likely hurting your fingers. The art of making catches in the long-field is by judging the flight of the ball well and of course being able to get to it. It is advisable when in the act of catching, to allow your hands to give a little, by doing this the ball will not rebound in any way and will have less chance of getting out.

No matter where you may be placed, or how often you may be changed, do as you are told immediately, and it would be advisable for you to be on the look out for a sign from the bowler, captain or wicket-keeper, when you can move as required without drawing the attention of the batsman, for there are many times a bowler wants a fieldsman to move a short distance from where he is standing, and wishes to convey the notice without being seen; the time generally chosen for this is when he is walking back to the place from which he commences to bowl.

Should you make a mistake do not think about it, and try all the harder. I think it very true with fielding, that one mistake makes many, for I have often noticed really good fieldsmen make a mistake, and for a time seem to go all to pieces, then, by trying hard and strict attention, get into their form again.

With the cricket-grounds in such perfect order as they are at the present time, there seems to be really no excuse for bad ground fielding, and such a thing is not often seen. When mistakes are made it is generally through the ball bumping up at the last moment, or perhaps breaking away a

little, and taking the fieldsman by surprise, for such things are not expected or looked for upon the grounds which have the greatest amount of confidence placed in them. And yet it should not be so, for the fieldsman should be prepared for anything, or rather he is supposed to be so. I have seen really wonderful fielding upon rough grounds, and no matter how the ball bumped, shot or broke away, it was stopped, and I often wondered what fielding would be like if all first-class cricketers, upon their good grounds, displayed the same amount of watchfulness and activity that I then saw.

There can be no doubt that the prettiest sight of all is to see a team who are fielding really well, each one seeming to try to outdo his neighbour, and the whole imbued with the idea of saving runs and getting their opponents out. It arouses a great amount of enthusiasm, not only among the spectators, but also among the players themselves, and as each brilliant piece of fielding is done the player is rewarded, not only with the worthy thought that he has done his duty, but that his skill is duly appreciated by those about him.

You must then always remember that no matter how good you are with the bat, you must also be able to field well, for unless you can do so you will be left out of many matches that you have the most ardent wish to play in, and have the mortification of seeing a player who cannot bat nearly as well as you can, but who is a very good field, put into the team in your stead. In a great many cases it is very much easier to save runs than make them, and so it is that a really first-class field is worthy of his place in a team.

Cricket itself, and the grounds upon which the game is played, have within the last few years made great advances and improvement, and the placing of the field has, to a certain extent, altered. This is most noticeable with medium-paced bowlers, who, on good wickets, only have one man on the on side; this is attributable to their accuracy, and enables them to very much strengthen the off side. Of course, when the



ball is breaking at all then it is that nearly all the duly recognised plans come into force, and it is advisable that I should set them out.

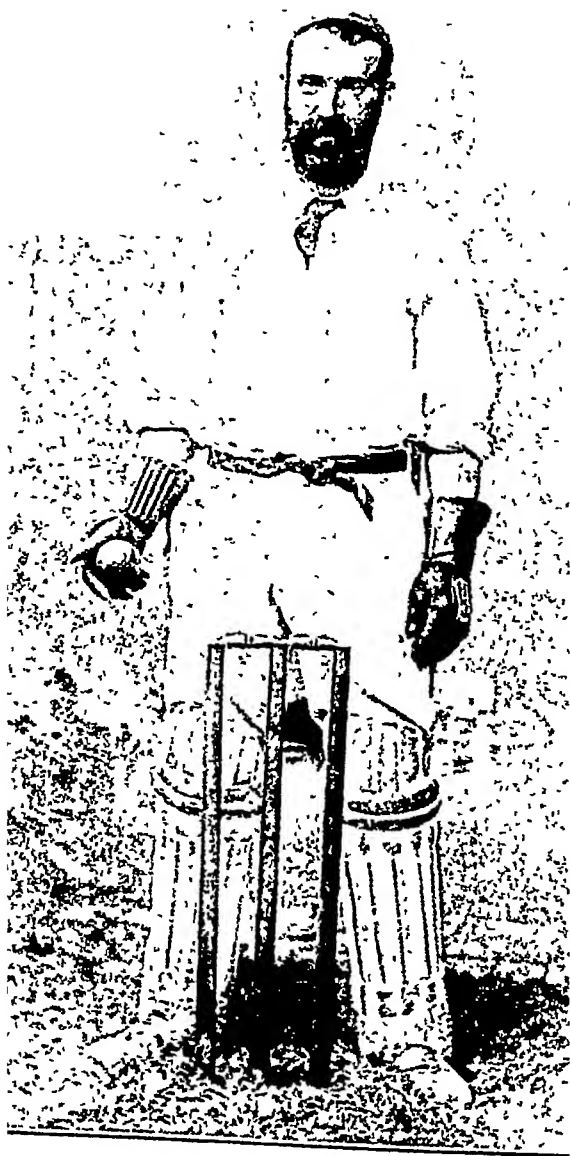
## THE WICKET-KEEPER.

I THINK everyone who understands the game will most readily admit that this is the most difficult and important position of the whole field. Only those who keep wickets, or have tried to do so, really know what a task it is, and also what a thankless one. You are supposed to stop every ball that passes the batsman and the wicket, to take every chance that is given you, and, in fact, to never make a mistake; should you do this, it is only what you should do, it is taken as a matter of course, and very little praise is given you. Not that cricketers play the game for the sake of the praise they may get, but, at the same time, there is a certain amount of satisfaction in knowing that your efforts are appreciated, and I am sure this knowledge every person who plays likes to have.

On the other hand, every mistake is duly noticed and chronicled, a due record of the byes you let made against you, and notwithstanding you may have bruised hands, judgment is given against you.

No mistake in the field is so excusable as that made by a wicket-keeper, and were the difficulties of the position thoroughly understood I think many unkind criticisms would be left unsaid. I do not wish to defend the defects in wicket-keepers, but simply to make my readers understand what a difficult and onerous position it is to fill.

I am sure none of my remarks would deter any young beginner, nor have I the slightest wish for them to do so; for I know what a great charm there is in being behind the wicket. It is the position in which I first entered the cricket-field, and was one that had the greatest charm and pleasure for me for many years.



J. M'C. BLACKHAM.



As in batting the greatest essential in wicket-keeping is the timing and having your hands working in perfect unison with your eyes. It is to your perfect timing that you have to look in preventing your hands from being bruised and your fingers being hurt, for it is only when mis-timing the ball you are very apt to close your fingers just a little before the ball comes to hand, and you consequently suffer.

The first thing to do is to get a comfortable stand behind the wicket, having your feet a sufficient distance away from it, that will enable you to bring your hands or rather the tips of your fingers to within about an inch of the wicket—in fact, you want to get them as close as you can without touching, and this without having your arms stretched out. I should suggest not quite two feet, you will then find that your elbows are almost on your sides and the hands in the proper position, when you can use them as quickly as necessary. As there is so much medium-paced bowling at the present time, it will be as well for you to stand so that your body is behind the middle and off, or off wicket, this will enable you to have a better command of the off side, without having to move your feet.

When taking the ball, try and do so with the one action and, of course, as near to the wicket as you can. What I mean by this is, do not allow your hands to go back, as it were, with the ball, and then bring them to the wicket, but meet the ball and carry it to the bails all with the one action; you will thus save the particle of time that may mean beating the batsman. This is the great secret of Blackham's brilliant wicket-keeping, for he takes the ball closer to the wicket and with this one action better than anyone I ever saw.

You want to do this with all balls which you take to the wickets with the object of stumping if necessary. All wicket-keepers seem to be able to watch the ball and the poppingcrease at the same time, and it is very necessary for them to do so, for they cannot afford to lose a chance. Do not be afraid to knock the bails off if you have the slightest doubt,

for it is such momentary work, that at times you cannot see, and you can always put the bails on again without any trouble.

Be as quiet in all your actions as you can, without any unnecessary flourishing, and do not appeal without reasonable cause, for not only is it unfair to the umpires and batsmen, but is the means of getting you a reputation that it is just as well to be without.

Always remember that on the line is out.

You are able to see all the balls to the off in a much better way than you do on the leg side, and consequently depend in most cases on your hands; but on the leg side it is different. Nowadays, when the responsibility of no long stop is upon the shoulders of the wicket-keeper, you have to do everything in your power to prevent byes, and it is when the ball goes to leg that the all-in system comes into full force. You, of course, cannot get such a good sight of the ball, and therefore are not able to judge it so correctly; it is then necessary to move well on the leg side and put your body behind it so that in case you do not stop it with your hands, you do so with your pads or body. It is not often that you get chances of stumping on the leg side, and when you do, there is a certain amount of chance work about it—although at times I have seen Blackham do such things that it looked the simplest and easiest thing in the world.

You are always able to tell whether a batsman intends playing forward or back; when forward, then be ready and take the ball to the bails with one action. When he plays back there is no need, for he will not then drag over the crease, and you can come back with your hands when, should the ball be touched, you will have a greater chance of making the catch.

With very fast bowling you will rarely get a chance of stumping, and you will save your hands a very good deal by allowing them to give a little as you are taking the ball. Up to a short time ago it was considered not the correct thing for a wicket-keeper to stand back to this class of bowling, but of

late it has come into great force and with very good effect. It is no doubt a very good plan, for not only are the hands and eyes saved, but many catches are made that otherwise would have been missed.

It is hardly necessary for me to remind you to always be on the look out, for if you are not, you will be reminded in a much better way than any I could tell you.

You are in the position to see all that goes on—can tell how a bowler is bowling, and if too short it is advisable that you should tell him; you can see if the batsman is defective in any particular stroke, and, in fact, by your observation and suggestions can immensely help the bowler and your captain. Never be afraid to offer suggestions; you can invariably depend upon their being received in the proper spirit.

You should always be upon your feet in a way that will enable you to start quickly, for you may have to make a short, sharp dash for a catch just in front of the wicket or on the leg side, and again want to get quickly to a ball played on the leg side, so as to save the run.

When the ball is returned from the field always be behind your wicket if possible, and ever be ready for the sharp returns from round about the wicket; should you relax your vigilance for a moment, it may mean overthrows and runs.

Try your hardest and best all the time and do not be disheartened by a few non-successes, hard knocks and perhaps adverse criticisms: You are almost sure to be the recipient of all these; but do not allow yourself to be influenced by them in any way or let your taste for this branch of the game decrease in the slightest: should you do so, the charm has gone, and you will not make very great improvement.

## LONG STOP.

As far as first-class cricket is concerned long stopping has become a thing of the past. Whether this has been brought about by the improvement of the grounds, the accuracy of the

bowling, or the ability of the wicket-keepers of the present day, it would be, perhaps, hard to determine; but I expect the combination is answerable for doing away with a position which at one time was one of the most important, and for which a player was very often selected solely on his ability to fill this place. Being able to do without a long stop has done, in my opinion, an immense amount of good to the game. It places an extra field at the captain's disposal, and I am sure it is answerable for the very great improvement in the wicket-keeping of the last few years.

### SHORT SLIP.

THIS position, to my mind, is only second to the wicket-keeper, both in importance and the difficult, hard work that has to be done. It is a place that requires plenty of practice, and how few fieldsmen there are who could go there and at the first do themselves justice. I have often heard players say: "Oh, I like to field so-and-so," but I have hardly ever heard any one say they like fielding at short slip, and go there in preference to any other place. To fill this position, you want to be very quick and to be able to catch very well indeed, and also very attentive, for the ball comes to you so quickly and at so many angles that you will find no time for anything else but watching the ball. You require to be quickness itself, for you have to stoop to a ball coming low or reach and time one that is travelling very fast over your head; again, you have chances that you can only reach with one hand, and no doubt these are most difficult, for you may have to stretch your arm out so far that all your muscles are at the utmost tension, when it is most difficult to retain the ball in your hand. You must always try and retain your hold of the ball, even if you should fall whilst making the catch. Should this happen to you, remember to hold your hand as far off the ground as you can, otherwise the umpire may think the ball has touched the ground and give the batsman in.

The correct distance for you to stand from the wicket is governed entirely by the pace of the bowler and the nature of the wicket, for you will necessarily stand much closer to a medium-paced bowler, when the ball is coming slowly off the pitch, than you would when the wicket is fast. Always be on the look out, for fear the bowler wishes you to move; he may want you a little nearer or deeper, finer or wider, and, no matter which it is or how little, move at once, for, no matter how well you may be able to judge, it is your duty to obey, and it satisfies the bowler, which I have known on many occasions to be a very great thing.

You stand, stooping slightly, with your hands ready in front of your body and watch the bowler as he is delivering the ball, for you will nearly always be able to tell if it is his intention to bowl a fast ball, when you will be fully prepared. There is always the variation in pace to be watched, and it is necessary for you to have as clear a view of the ball as you can.

Do not anticipate at all, for in nine cases out of ten you will be wrong. What I mean by this is, that you see the ball pitched, perhaps it is a little more to the off than usual, and you think it will be so much wider of you and you move in that direction; or, may be, it is pitched on the leg stump and you move to the on side, with the no doubt laudable object of saving the run, the result being that the ball has gone to the spot where you have been and should have remained standing. You have quite enough to do without trying to judge where the ball will be hit.

All the best short slips I have ever known get their position and keep it, never moving until after the ball has hit the bat; and my advice to you is to do the same.

You have also to remember that it is your place to run after the snicks on the leg side, and generally the byes. You must also back-up the wicket-keeper; and should he have occasion to run away from the wicket, you will run up to his place, so as to back the ball if necessary.

Do not be afraid to try for anything; for you will never



know what you can really reach until you try. You have only to watch a few of the cricketers of the present day fielding in the slips to know how it all should be done : and then, by constant practice and attention, try and make yourself as good as they are.

### THIRD MAN.

In this position the fieldsman has a lot of responsible work to do ; and, no matter how things are going, he must always keep cool and collected. It is to this part of the field a great number of short runs are made ; and it is really wonderful with what ease runs can be made by two batsmen who thoroughly understand each other ; so it is thoroughly necessary for you to be in the right spot, and even should the run be made two or three times, do not get flurried in any way. You have to be very watchful, for the ball may curl or break away out of your reach, and comes at times in the most awkward manner. There is no one to back you up, and should you miss fielding the ball, it means three or four runs, and a very good run for yourself. The correct spot to stand is that, no matter what the pace of the wicket is, in which you can save the run. You require plenty of dash, and, should the run be attempted, quick decision as to the proper wicket for the ball to be thrown, and when throwing throw it on the full and about a foot above the bails.

### POINT.

To make a good point you require to have good and quick eyesight, to be able to catch well, activity and good judgment, so as to tell quickly whether a batsman intends playing forward or back, and how he intends to make the stroke which may cause the ball to come flying in your direction. It is as well, whilst filling this position, for you to have a knowledge of all the batsmen you play against ; but, of course, it takes a

considerable time for you to do this ; when attained, you act according to the strength or weakness of the batsman's cutting capabilities. For instance, where a player cuts strongly and well, you keep the proper distance away, treating the stroke with the respect it so richly deserves ; but, on the other hand, you can go much nearer to a batsman who cannot and does not make the stroke well. As in most places in the field, the distance you stand away from the wicket is governed by the pace both of the bowling and of the ground, and the position is generally a little in front of a line with the wicket. I think point, as a rule, takes a sharp glance at the bowler as he is delivering the ball and then watches the batsman ; he can then tell whether to move or not ; for should the batsman play the ball either forward or back, he can work in towards the wicket in a greater or lesser degree, according to the condition of the ground. You must always be careful not to run in too far ; for many times have I seen the best of points do this, fully expecting the ball to fall into their ready hands, when, to their utmost chagrin, it calmly went over their heads and fell quietly to the ground at their backs. When you see the batsman framing to cut the ball, I think it by far the best plan to remain still ; you will then be far more ready for the catch, or to stop it, than by moving or trying to judge the spot where it may go. My experience has been that far more catches come to hand when point does not try to anticipate.

Watch the game, and always be ready to back-up the wicket-keeper or bowler when required.

### COVER-POINT.

To fill this position the fieldsman must be in the best of condition, for he has to be continually on the move, covering a fair area of ground ; and what with dashing in to the ball, and having to chase it very frequently to prevent its going to the boundary, he will have his staying powers taxed to the utmost. To anyone who is really fond of fielding this is a

capital place, for they get such a lot of work to do, although, since the introduction of the extra cover-point, a little of the work is taken away from the cover proper. Still, there is enough left for him to do; and to see a really first-class fieldsmanship fielding at this place is a very great pleasure indeed. You want to be very quick upon your feet, for you have to be continually on the look-out for the ball that is played slowly and the run attempted. It would be easy for you to get the proper position were the ball to come always with the same pace; but unfortunately, from a fieldsmanship's point of view, they do not; and as the ball is very often hit in your direction at a great pace, you want to be a sufficient distance away to give you a chance of getting to and stopping it. By watching the batsman, you will know directly he makes the stroke what you have to do, and whether he has any idea of a run. You must be able to pick the ball up and return it to the wicket as it were with one action; but do not make the mistake of wanting to throw it before you have fielded it. You want to throw with accuracy and speed; and when throwing, get into the way of never allowing your arm to get above the level of your shoulder: it will be a quick, wristy throw, and, with a little practice, you will get very accurate. You must be ready for everything; for no matter how the ball may bump, shoot or twist about, or at what pace it may come, the penalty for holding such a responsible position is that you are expected to stop everything. Whenever I see a really good man fielding at cover-point and doing brilliant things, it always recalls to my mind the many occasions I have had the pleasure of watching the Rev. Vernon Royle, who was, to my mind, the safest and most brilliant cover-point among many very good ones indeed.

### MID-OFF.

This is another position in which there is plenty to do, and you must be untiring in your efforts; for, although you generally have the man in the long-field to support you, you often

have a good run after the ball; you also cover a good space to the left and right. You, again, have to look out for those hits which send the ball back to the bowler, whom it is your duty to be constantly backing-up. It is very necessary for you to be able to catch well and with either hand; for many brilliant catches are made in this position, and there is no doubt many of them require a lot of catching and holding, for the ball is hit very hard to you, as a rule. At times you have to stoop low down for the catch; another time it is driven straight at your body; and then there is the most difficult catch of all—the one that is rising from the moment it leaves the bat: how hard this is to catch a number of cricketers know to their cost; for it is so easy to misjudge the height of it—you do not get your hand or hands high enough—the consequence being it hits the tips of your fingers, bruises them, or perhaps puts a joint out. You must always watch the batsman, so as to get an idea as to the stroke he intends playing; and should he play it quickly in front of him towards you, dash in at once, so as to save the single. With practice, you will soon be able to tell, from the pitch of the ball and the nature of the stroke, the direction in which it will go, and thus you will gain a yard or two that may be very beneficial. You must face anything and everything, and never flinch. You have many chances of making a run-out; and, as they are generally quick things, you must have good judgment to notice and decide the proper wicket to throw to: you must decide instantly, and return the ball with accuracy and speed. Like all players who field so near the wickets, you should practice occasionally your throwing: throw to the wicket-keeper from your position, with good speed, trying to make him take the ball about a foot above the bails.

### LONG-FIELD.

MANY cricketers look upon this position as the easiest and most desirable in the whole field, thinking that, whatever they

have to do, they will have plenty of time to see the ball and judge accordingly. And yet how often has the wish been that the time had not been so long; for when the ball is coming to you from a lofty hit, the time seems twice as long as it really is. You have, no doubt, judged it well, and are waiting for it with ready hands; you know that everyone is watching the ball and yourself; and the thought comes to you, "Oh, what if I should miss it!" and, should you do so, what a duffer you are called! It is, without doubt, the most uncomfortable catch you can have, and you cannot be too careful over it. To catch well in the out-field, you must be able to judge the flight of the ball correctly; for by doing so you get well to the ball, and make ordinary catches very easy. Do not get too far underneath the ball, for it is far easier to run or reach forward than it is back. In making lofty catches, always judge them so the ball will come down immediately in front of you, and remember coolness is everything. I do not think the correct way to hold your hands for these catches has ever been defined. I doubt if there is one; for I have often spoken to many cricketers about it, and not only could they not tell me, but until they had put up their hands as in the act of catching, they did not know how they did hold their hands. Of one thing I am certain—you should allow your hands to give a little as the ball comes into them, and so save any chance of rebounding. It is good for you to take a good deal of practice; you can always get this in the field. Another capital way is to practise with the ball being hit from the bat; it then comes to you with the spin on it, and you are forced to make the catch in a greater variety of ways than when thrown by the hand.

Your principal work in the out-field is the ground-field; for you have to run well, so as to save the boundary hits and also the twos and threes. You can generally judge the number of runs that will be run; and when the ball is hit straight to you there should be only one run, for you must run in to meet it, pick it up and throw it in immediately; do not keep

it in your hand for a moment, as the slightest dwelling will very often enable the batsmen to run again. Do not run in with it and then throw, or pretend to throw.

Do not be afraid to try for anything in reason; for how often are catches brought off that are not expected; and it is always worth losing four runs in the chance of obtaining a wicket.

The faster you can run the better; you will get to the ball quicker and be able to cover more ground; combine this with a safe pair of hands, coolness and good judgment, and with plenty of practice, you will become a fieldsman whose value is hard to estimate, and whose services cannot be done without.

### MID-ON.

THIS, at one time, used to be a very nice, easy position, and on certain wickets it is not so bad at the present time; but it is upon fast wickets that mid-on has far more work to do than formerly. 'This is on account of short-leg being taken away and utilised elsewhere.' With the bowlers so accurate, the on side is generally left to the care of this fieldsman, who, should the bowlers get on the leg side and be hit either to leg or played to short-leg, has to do short-leg's work, and also many times run down to square-leg. The position you should stand entirely depends upon the nature of the wicket: should it be a good wicket, it is a mistake to stand too close; and either level with the bowler's wicket, or a little behind it, is the correct distance. Should the bowler, however, want you to move nearer or deeper, you will, of course, go. On a wicket where the ball is breaking or kicking, you may go closer—the distance from the batsman being governed by your judgment, nerve, and the batsman's style. You must also have plenty of confidence in the bowler. It is not often this position is made such a one as makes it shine above others; and yet I have seen it so made by H. F. Boyle, of Australian Eleven fame. Principally to F. R. Spofforth's bowling, on a

bowler's wicket, he used to stand very close in and effect some truly wonderful catches. Whilst standing so close, he invariably turned his head and saw the ball bowled, when he seemed to know how the batsman would play the ball. I never saw him hurt about the body but once, and then it was by the only batsman whose ability at a particular stroke could enable him to do so. It was in a match at Clifton, Australia v. Gloucestershire. T. W. Garrett was bowling the off theory, on a good wicket, to E. M. Grace, who reached for one well on the off side, and, hitting it fairly, much to our astonishment hit it round to where Boyle was standing at short mid-on, whom it hit in the throat. We did not know at that time what a master of that stroke E. M. was, but we did afterwards.

### SHORT-LEG.

ON any wicket that the bowler can break the ball, or when a batsman is very strong at playing off his legs and the leg stump, a short-leg is always played, and is a very useful man. It is not by any means an easy position to fill; for lots of good judgment is needed, and you have to be very quick and a safe catch. There are a variety of strokes by which the batsman can score, and you want to be ever on the move. You must have good judgment, so as to tell what the batsman is trying to do; for he can play the ball fine, square or in between yourself and mid-on; then you have to look out for the short ball that is round in your direction. The most difficult ball to judge is the one when the batsman plays forward and it is breaking on to his bat; this very often goes to you, and is both hard to judge and catch, for the spin has a wonderful effect. It is a kind of wandering position: for one, over, you may be behind the wicket; for another, in front; and yet again, square. The bowler may change you very often, and this you must not mind. You must ever be on the look-out for the short ball when dragged round, and the one that is hit when

over-tossed : these will be on you very quickly, and, as a rule, towards your head, for the batsmen try to hit over your head. I have seen three or four wonderful catches made by short-leg standing square ; but the thought occurred to me that a feeling of self-preservation had a great deal to do with them, as the hands had to go and were up in a flash ; so, with catches of this description, you must use your hands as quickly. You have to get close to the wicket, at the same time bearing in mind that, should the ball pass you, it is very likely you will have to run after it, whilst two or three runs are being made.

You have also to be on the alert in backing-up the wicket-keeper, and especially so when the ball is being fielded by mid-off or cover-point ; for when they return, it is generally at good speed, and your not backing-up may mean an over-throw for four.

## LONG-LEG.

How very seldom we now see this position filled. The bowlers of to-day are able to bowl so accurately and understand the off theory so well, that they can do without a long-leg, feeling, no doubt, that when they do make a mistake and bowl one on the leg side, the batsman, should he hit it, deserves the four. There are not many bowlers who place a long-leg and bowl for him ; in fact, W. G. Grace is the only one I can call to mind ; and even he does not get the victims now that he did when G. F. Grace used to field there in such brilliant fashion. As in the long-field, so it is at long-leg : you want to have plenty of judgment, speed, able to throw quickly and catch well. You have to look out and get to the ball quickly, so as to save the second run. You want to pick the ball up without the least delay, and return it to the wicket with speed and accuracy, so that either the bowler or wicket-keeper will be able to take it on the first bound and over the wicket. You must also notice the batsmen running, and judge the proper wicket to throw to. If you can do so, always use



your two hands, and, although it does not look so graceful as fielding with the one, it is far safer. Of course, there are many occasions when you can only use the one hand; then it is time enough for you to do so: always make it a matter of necessity and not of choice. You should really never use your feet to stop the ball with; but, at the same time, there are rare occasions that, if you wish to save the four, you must do so: it occurs generally when you are running at your top speed to intercept a ball, and on arriving at the given point you find you cannot stoop quick enough to field the ball, then it is quite excusable for you to try and stop it with your feet, for a run saved is one gained.

You should always have your eyes on the bowler, for fear he should sign to you to move, either finer or squarer, according to his idea of enticing the batsman to hit a catch in your direction.

As the chances of a catch sent to you are few and far between, you must have a good try for everything there is a possibility of your getting to. In all catches that you have to wait for, remember to allow your hands to give a little as the ball comes into them.

## CAPTAINCY.

How many times and occasions has been applied the quotation of "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown," and I am quite certain that a better or more appropriate one cannot be found to apply to the cricketer who has the honour to be the captain of his side. It is a very great honour indeed to be the chosen one, and most gratifying to feel that your fellow cricketers have such confidence in your abilities as to place you in such a high position. In my young days the captain to me was a totally different personage to any other member of the team, inasmuch as he had to be treated with the most profound respect, his commands were to be obeyed without murmur, the words of wisdom that he allowed

to fall upon us were as pearls without price, his word was law in everything, in fact he could do no wrong—altogether a person to be very much envied indeed, and the position once gained, nothing further to wish for. But how different the reality. True, there is a certain amount of honour and glory attached to the captain of the winning side, and everything is very nice indeed, so long as you are sailing with a fair wind and winning; but when the time comes, as it always does, for your defeat, what a number of sins and mistakes you are made answerable and responsible for. You should or should not have bowled so and so; you kept A. on too long or not long enough, or failed to try B.; and so on to the end. Whilst sitting in pavilions I have often heard such remarks, no doubt some with a great deal of truth and reason, but all those that play know what a different game cricket is as played out in the field to what it is when sitting and judging it from the pavilion.

I know that generally lookers-on see most of the game, but I think it is not strictly applicable to cricket, for during the progress of the game many things occur which are not known outside the field, and these incidents are often accountable for the censure so freely expressed by the captious onlooker, who very often forgets that a captain does everything for the benefit of his side.

We have a few cricketers, who, in their respective departments of the game, are as near perfect as possible, but there never has been, or, in my opinion, ever will be, a perfect captain, for no matter what care you take or what forethought is exercised, mistakes will occur, and as we all know that to err is human, I think a captain is very often to be sympathised with and excused, and not come in for, as is so often the case, the condemnation that is so generally allotted to him upon the slightest reason.

A good captain should possess good sound judgment, quick and good perception, keenness, a good, even temperament, to be cool and collected, no matter what occurs, firmness, and to

have a good stock of that virtue with which the Biblical hero, Job, was so much endowed, and is known as Patience. All these qualities, and any others that he may have, are certain to be taxed to, at times, the highest degree in the fulfilment of the many duties that he has to give thought and attention to, both on and off the field. A hasty temper does not do at all, for the least thing might cause it to break out and cause serious mistakes to be made, or perhaps a friction that is not at all conducive to the welfare of the side.

Both on and off the field the captain should in every way show the best of examples to his team, for there is no doubt the force of example is of great benefit to a side, and especially so to its younger members.

There are certain preliminaries that it is as well not to forget, and which are generally attended to before the toss is made for choice of innings. There are the times for commencing and drawing the wickets, the interval for luncheon, and, if necessary, the fixing of the value for boundary hits. These duties, to a very large extent, are made very easy on account of the majority of grounds having certain regulations or laws, which, as a rule, set out the respective times. It is as well, however, just to mention it before the toss, and so save any chance of a misunderstanding. If any alterations in the times are needed the two captains can easily and generally do that.

The hardest part of a captain's duties is, undoubtedly, when he and his team are in the field, for he has to give the utmost thought and attention to the task of getting his opponents out as speedily as possible, and, in doing so, utilising his forces in the most advantageous manner.

The first thing for him to do, if he has not done so before tossing, is to take a good look at the wicket, so as to get an idea what is its condition and pace, and to judge the most suitable bowlers to put on. On every side there is generally a champion, or perhaps two—or, rather, I should say, two bowlers who are considered the best, and who are in the habit

of starting. These will be started ; but before doing so, the captain will find it a good plan to let them select which end they will respectively bowl from. If one is left hand and the other right, the incline of the ground will tell the proper ends ; but should they both wish for the one end, then you will have to decide. The bowlers will, as a rule, agree, and by bowling at the end they fancy, they will bowl much better ; for my experience of bowlers has been that there is a great deal in this fancy which, to a great many of my readers, may seem an absurd one.

At any time a good combination to start with is a right-hand bowler at one end and left-hand at the other, and especially so on a wicket where the ball breaks ; for the actions are so dissimilar and the break of the ball so opposite as to make it very difficult for the batsmen. There is a great deal in having a difference in the action, style and pace of bowlers, and if you can, never have on at the same time two bowlers who are similar, for then there is no chance of the batsman getting out of his timing. On difficult wickets your resources are not generally taxed to any great extent, and your task is a comparatively easy one ; but it is when you have to get a good side out on a good hard wicket that you have to exercise all your powers. On this, and in fact on any wicket that will take fast bowling, it is advisable to start your fast bowler. If he is not successful, do not bowl him too long, for runs come very quickly off fast bowling, and the longer he bowls the more apt he is to tire and become a little slow. Upon a fast wicket it is a good plan to try a lob bowler immediately after a fast bowler, for everything is so different that the batsman is very apt to make a mistake ; especially so, as most do not treat a lob bowler with the respect they do the others. You must never bowl the lobs too long ; you can generally tell by the way the batsman shapes at them whether he can play them or not. They are very useful indeed for a change, but it is hardly any use bowling them to those who play them well and properly.

One of the most important points is to know when and how to change your bowling. You have to use a great deal of discernment and judgment, for most bowlers prefer not being taken off. Still it has to be done; you watch their form from the commencement and judge how they are bowling, and whether there are any signs of tiring; you will also be helped by asking the wicket-keeper what he thinks, for he is in the best position of the whole field to judge how the bowling is. A bowler may be bowling well, but with an element of bad luck. In this case you should always keep him on for a few overs longer, and then, if the spell is not broken, rest him for a time. It generally has the desired effect, although I have seen bowlers have the bad luck keep to them all day. You must never be frightened to change your bowling, and no matter what your bowlers are, remember any change is better than none at all. In making your changes do not do it too quickly, for you must give your bowlers every chance, for sometimes they are stiff for two or three overs, and require a little time to get into their proper swing. Should you think at any time that a particular kind of ball would be effectual, you should quickly suggest it to the bowler. Your first change in the bowling should be made when thirty runs have been scored; this is, of course, dependent upon your bowlers bowling well. If not, you will make the change much quicker. I am not a believer in making a change after a series of maiden overs, for the bowling must be very good to cause the maidens to be played, and the slightest mistake on the part of the batsman would prove fatal. The only advantage in making the change would be that the batsman might be a little impatient at not getting a run for such a time, and launch out at the new bowler, who would not be so accurate as the one he had just been playing. By doing this, you run the risk of taking off a bowler who is bowling exceedingly well, and who is very likely, should he happen to get a wicket, to get two or three others very quickly. As an illustration, I have only to recall to your mind the memorable match between England

and Australia, played at Kennington Oval, when the Australians were victorious by the narrow majority of seven runs. At one time of the game there were a great number of maiden overs bowled in succession by Spofforth and Boyle, and had either been taken off, there can be no doubt but that England would have won the match very easily. Once you have tried a bowler, do not make the mistake of forgetting all about him, for a second trial may do a great deal of good.

Should any of the fieldsmen at any time offer you any suggestions, be sure to listen attentively, for many valuable hints are given in this way. You are not necessarily bound to act on them; but, as in many other cases, two heads are sometimes a great deal better than one, and your being open to receive such suggestions is duly appreciated by your fellow players.

In placing your team in their relative positions, you must, of course, have a certain knowledge of their respective abilities, so as to utilise them in the best possible manner. When playing a series of matches it is very desirable to have the same constitution of the team if possible, so that you at first can work them in different places, and so find out their strongest points, with the view of their filling, permanently, the position you assign to them. Of course there are times when you have to change; but this need not affect your principal places.

During the progress of the game you will have to change the position of your fieldsmen many times, according to the requirements of the case. At all times try to save your team as much as possible as regards the distances they have to move; this means a great deal in a long day's fielding. I have known cases of a fieldsmen, during a day's outing, fielding in every part of the field, with the exception of bowling and wicket-keeping. I need hardly say, this kind of thing should be most studiously avoided.

You place your field according to the style of the batsman you have to get out, the pace and method of your bowler, and

the nature of the wicket. Cricket, without doubt, is a game of attack and defence, consequently you have to exercise all your powers and forces in making the combined attack as strong as possible. To do this you rely on your bowlers and fieldsmen, and so as to place the latter in the most advantageous positions you must try and be conversant with the strength of each batsman's play. You must be quick to understand all the strong strokes by which runs are made. Most batsmen have one stroke which they make better than any other, and by which they can score. Knowing this, it is your place to put a field there, so that no run can be made, your main object being to try and stop the batsman from making runs off his good and strong strokes. You must try and detect any weakness there may be, and, of course, act accordingly.

As all bowlers have an idea, and in most cases a correct one, of the way their field should be placed, it is advisable for you to ask him how he would like his field, and to see his wishes carried out. At the same time should you not think him quite correct, it is your place to suggest a little alteration, for you may have a greater knowledge of the batsman's abilities, and another man to strengthen any particular position may make all the difference. You are expected to and should notice everything, and must see that all are in their proper places before each over is commenced, taking care they do not move unless told to do so. It is almost impossible to keep some fieldsmen in their places, for they seem unable to keep still; but you should try and do so, for not only does it lose runs but very often fidgets the bowler. You should always make a point of fielding near the wicket, so that you can notice everything much better, and are more accessible than you would be if in the long-field. In the event of two fieldsmen going for a catch you should judge which one has the better chance of making it, and at once call out his name, and so save any doubt or hesitancy, or very likely a collision which will be the means of the catch being missed altogether.

If at any time a fieldsman make a mistake or two, and you think it would be beneficial to change him to some other position, do not make the change at once unless it is absolutely necessary. Allow an over or two to pass; you will in this way save any little feeling of irritation or annoyance that may otherwise be felt, and which it is always as well to avoid if possible.

Most happily the game is played in such a genial and generous spirit that occasions when the captain has to reprimand anyone are very few and far between, but still the time may come to you at any moment. When it does, a great amount of judgment will have to be used by you in determining whether you will have to speak before the other members of your team or to the offending one quietly. As a rule, a quiet minute or two is all that is necessary, but should you feel that, in justice to yourself or as an example to the others of your side, the occasion requires you to speak openly, do so at once and firmly, for you cannot have it understood too soon or too clearly that your authority must be obeyed and duly recognised.

When his side are batting the captain has a very much easier time, although there are many little duties he has to attend to, besides having to keep an eye on the game. One of the principal duties of a captain is to win the toss, for in nine cases out of ten it is an advantage, and yet there are times when he who has won would very much rather his opponent had the responsibility of deciding as to whether or not to take the first innings. Before deciding, you want to know the state and condition of the wicket, and to take notice of what the weather is likely to be. You will then be able to judge fairly well whether the wicket is getting worse or better, and have a very fair idea as to what the scoring is likely to be. It is always a risky policy to put your opponents in, and, as a rule, it is essential that you decide to have first innings, you will then invariably have the best of the wicket, and no matter how bad it may be, the chances are that it will be worse, and



cut up for the other side. Again, your side are fresh, and the batting is more likely to be up to form than if you had been fielding and were, perhaps, a little tired. The light is also much better and more even than in the evening, and when the final tussle is taking place it is much easier to save runs than to make them.

The order of putting your side in at times wants a good deal of consideration ; but, as a rule, the respective ability of the players will govern the order generally used. The man to put in first is the one who can be depended upon to keep up his wicket, for it is most useful to have one end kept up ; his partner should be a free scorer.

Once having made out the order of your side going in, do not alter it, unless circumstances take place which make you think it is advisable to do so. A wicket may fall first a few minutes before lunch, and you do not want to risk a valuable wicket ; it is then a good plan to put in an inferior bat. The same rule will apply if a wicket falls just before time for drawing stumps for the day.

Also, should you think it beneficial to put in a hitter in the place of a steady player, do so, as there are times when it is necessary for runs to be forced. Whenever the wicket is wet, with the ball cutting through, you should put in your quick scorers, so that the fullest advantage may be taken in making runs before the wicket becomes difficult. Some batsmen, when their turn comes, take more time than they should do in going in, so you should see that your men are ready, and prevent a time of waiting that is not necessary or pleasant to either players or onlookers.

If your bowlers are good batsmen, you should try to put them in early, so that, in the event of their getting a number of runs, they will be able to have a rest before having their turn at bowling.

During the interval between the innings, when your side are going to bat, it is necessary for you to consider the best manner for the wicket to be rolled ; also on each morning you

should notice that it is properly attended to. This you will find purely a matter of form; for at the present time the matter is so well and conscientiously attended to that really no bother need be taken about it. Still, it is a part of your duty, and should not be entirely forgotten.

Under the new Rule you have power to close your innings at any time during the last day of the match, and to do this effectively requires very nice judgment indeed; for you have to consider the strength of your opponents—batting, and the pace of their run-getting abilities—so as to allow yourself time to get them out, at the same time allowing them as narrow a margin to get the runs as you possibly can. I do not think a captain has a right to court defeat; but he can so calculate his time that there may be any amount of excitement at the finish.

You should never lose hope, no matter how black things look and the game going against you. Keep a bold front; whatever you may think or your feelings may be, never allow your countenance to express them. Your side depend upon you, and should you let them see you have lost all hope of the game, it will affect them in the most material manner possible. Always remember that no game is lost until it is won.

There are times that, do what you will, little frictions will arise amongst the members of your team; also occasions in which you are one of the principals. No matter what it may be, always try and be just and have them settled at once. Do not allow them to make any difference in your judgment or conduct, and, once settled, make no further reference to them.

Again let me remind you to always remember that by the example you show, so you do a great amount of good or harm to your side,

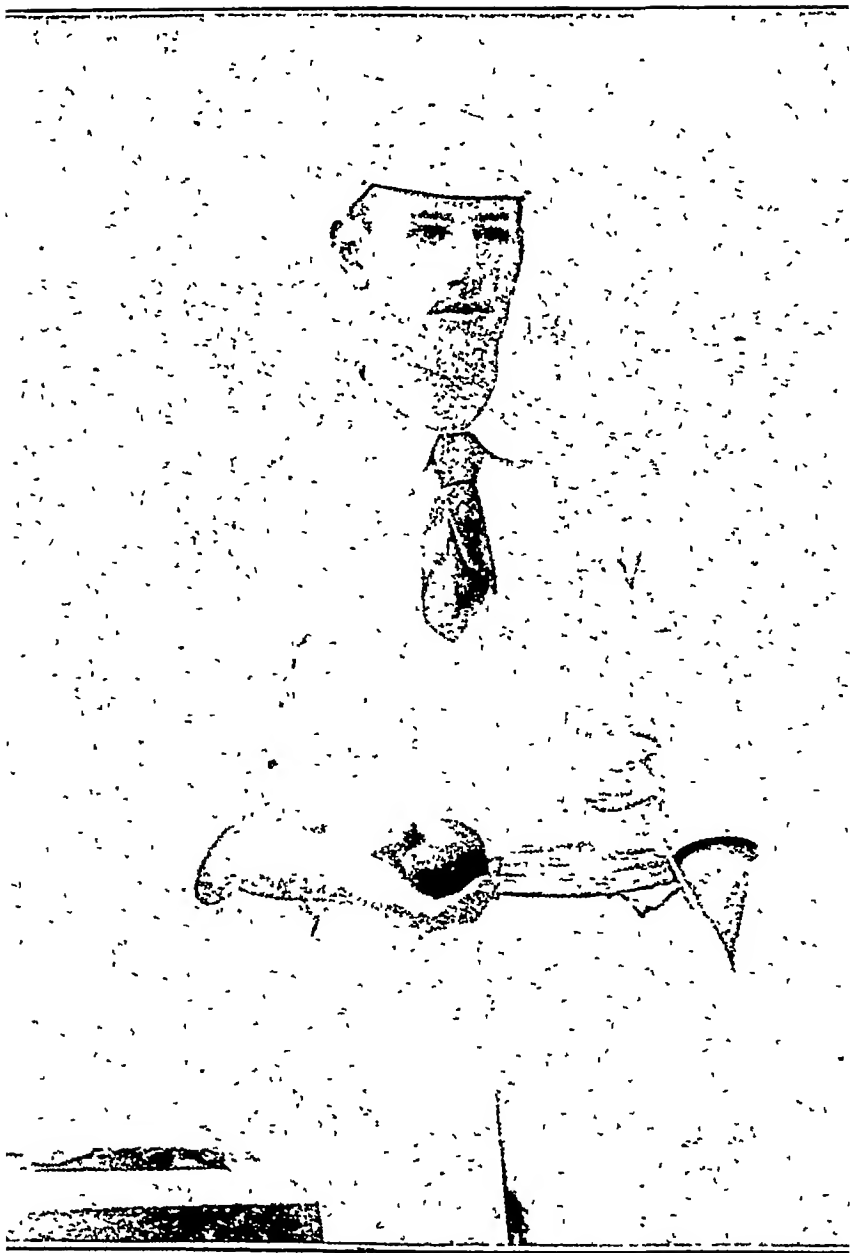
## BOWLING.

THIS branch of the game is beyond all doubt one of the most, if not actually the most, important in the cricket field, and no matter how strong a side may be in their batting and fielding, it is of the utmost importance for them to have one really first-class bowler, and should they not be fortunate enough to possess this very necessary commodity, the handicap will be very great indeed. In comparison to the great number of really first-class batsmen of the present day, how few really first-class bowlers there are. I have often wondered why this should be so, for one would imagine it would be just as easy to learn to bowl as to bat, in fact the bowling looks by far the easier. And yet none but those who have tried know how hard it is. How often one has heard the remark of a person being a born cricketer; whether this is so or not I must admit to not having yet quite solved the question, for my experience has been that they are very few and far between.

There is no doubt that nature bestows her gifts much more freely upon some than upon others, but no matter how plentifully, or in what particular way they are bestowed, to the recipient, as far as cricket, and bowling in particular, is concerned, unless he takes full advantage of his gifts, by doing all in his power to bring them forth, they will not be of much use, for without the practical knowledge that is so necessary, they would not be properly applied.

I think it will be generally admitted that the game of cricket all round has improved a great deal of late years, no doubt due, in a very great measure, to the almost perfect grounds that are provided for cricketers at every important place where the game is played.

All batsmen duly appreciate and are deeply thankful to those who provide and look after the fine wickets they play on, and at the first blush one would imagine that the bowlers did not, and ought not, to view the matter in the same way; and



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yet they should do so, for they have the good grounds to thank for the vast improvement that also has been made in all bowling, for bowlers of the present day have to exercise their thinking powers in a far greater degree than was the case a few years ago, when the wickets not being so good, the bowlers of that time simply bowled away, knowing very well that the wicket would do the rest. I think that many of my readers will recollect the time when the bowling was nearly all fast and which was very effectual on the rough wickets; fast bowlers were in the majority in those days, but how different it is at the present time, when really good fast bowlers are the exception and very hard to find.

It is the medium-paced bowler who has replaced the fast, and this is beyond all doubt attributable to the good wickets and the excellence of the batsmen, for the bowlers have found out it requires something more than mere bowling the ball as fast as possible, with a decent length, to get the batsmen out. It is now a regular duel between the bowlers and batsmen, the bowler to help him, has his fieldsmen, whilst the batsman has his bat, and then it is a case as to which has the greater knowledge and judgment, and also the greatest amount of patience.

The chances of the game are so evenly distributed that it is a very nice point as to whether the bowler or the batsman has any advantage of the other. Of course we all know when the wicket is bad it is the more difficult for the batsman, but then is it not fairly equalised when the wicket is really good?

I think there must be a great charm in bowling when one has attained the proud distinction of being recognised as a really first-class bowler, and the satisfaction of, perhaps, beating and procuring the wicket of the best batsman of the day must be great indeed. True, the procuring of wickets is much more a matter of course to the good bowlers than to those who, like myself, have trundled in a more humble way; but I am glad to say I have had the satisfaction of feeling that thrill of pleasure which goes through one as he sees the ball hit the wicket of a good batsman. I must admit to its

not having occurred to me very often or as frequently as I should have liked, but still, I have been lucky on one or two occasions, and the experience has been quite enough to teach me how bowlers must feel.

Now the great question is, how to become a really good bowler, and there is no doubt it depends entirely on yourself, for no matter what natural abilities you may have, you cannot hope to attain to first-class unless you give it that time and attention the subject so richly deserves. You may be able to bowl straight and keep a good length, or make the ball break, and imagine that is all that has to be done, but as you continue playing you will soon be taught that to be successful on the good wickets of the present day something else is required. The something else is the exercising of your brain power, and consequently becoming the happy possessor of what is generally termed in cricket, a good head. My young readers will soon realise what I mean if they will take the trouble to watch a bowler who has no other thought than that of running up and delivering the ball, and then notice in what a different way the bowler who uses his head goes to work. I think the difference is so very glaring that it is bound to make a great impression upon your mind. It will also be as well for you to notice how different the styles are in all the bowlers—not that I want you to copy any of them, for I certainly am not a believer in that, as far as bowling is concerned.

The majority of those who take to cricket have certain ideas as to bowling, and those who go in for it will find that the mode of delivering the ball will come to them in a very natural way, and to this delivery I should most strongly advise you to keep, for I think you are far more likely to have a greater command over the ball than by trying to copy the delivery of some particular bowler, when, if attained, you are very likely to find that you have sacrificed your length or break.

The young beginner has a great many things to learn; the first of which is to bowl straight. I fancy I can hear the

remark, "Oh, anyone can bowl straight." Well, I must say it does look simple enough, and no doubt it is; but, all the same, it requires a great amount of practice before even this simple ingredient in the art of bowling can be performed and continued for any length of time. And here let me recommend you not to commence to bowl until you are strong enough to bowl the ball the twenty-two yards without straining yourself. I know it may seem a very strange thing to tell a boy not to bowl, and how many would dream of obeying, especially in Australia, where, if the youngsters did not take their turn with the ball, they would not be able to have a game at all; but, at the same time, I am convinced that when the whole strength of a boy is required to enable him to bowl the ball from wicket to wicket, he cannot do so with any accuracy, and the ball being much too large for his small hands, he does a very great amount of harm to any natural ability he may have. During my own experience, I have seen a few cases of boys with beautiful styles, able to break the ball and with all the makings of really good bowlers, simply ruined through taxing their strength too much.

You will always need to remember to bowl within your strength at all times.

In learning to bowl straight it is a very good plan to bowl at three stumps, and the oftener you can hit them the greater progress you will be making.

When you are bowling get your arm as much over the shoulder as you possibly can, for the higher your hand is and the greater height the ball goes to the batsman from you, the more effectual, in every respect, is it likely to be. The higher the arm the more devil gets into the ball. You also have far more command over the ball for the purpose of making it break.

You must take care when bowling to use your arm in as free a manner as you possibly can. If you observe the bowlers of the present time, you will notice what a nice free action they invariably have, and will find it most noticeable



in the fast bowlers, whose pace is, I think, obtained in a great measure by the looseness of their arm action. Some may think that fast bowlers obtain their pace from the run they take up to the wickets, but this is a mistake, as Crossland, one of the fastest bowlers I ever played against, only took two or three steps. Allen Hill, of Yorkshire, whose delivery was the most perfect of any bowler I have ever seen, was another who took a short run, and there are many others who get up no end of pace simply from their freedom of action.

The length of the run up to the bowling crease cannot be laid down by any hard and fast rule, as the beginner will generally find out for himself the distance that is best suited to him. One would imagine that a long run would tire a bowler very much, but this cannot be so, for all the good bowlers of the day take good runs, and I think it can be looked upon that the general custom is to run from about seven yards upwards. There are a few bowlers who take a very long run indeed, the most notable case being that of Mr. J. J. Ferris, and yet he has told me that in an ordinary day's bowling he does not feel the slightest ill effect from it.

When the bowler runs up to the crease to deliver the ball he must take particular care not to drag the back foot over, for should he do so he will be no-balled, which is not at all pleasant at any time, and especially so if the batsman would have been out off that particular ball.

It may appear awkward at first for you to keep your foot just inside the crease, but with a little practice you will find no difficulty in putting the foot down in the right place. You must also bear in mind that you must not stop for a single moment at the crease before delivering the ball.

The proper way is to run up to the crease, and when the moment comes for you to deliver the ball do it without checking yourself in the slightest degree. There are a good many bowlers who make the momentary stop I refer to, and I have

noticed particularly that the ball does not come off the ground with anything like the devil that it does when delivered in the correct way.

All bowlers when they commence their run present a full front to the batsman, who can plainly see the bowler's arm, but when the ball is delivered the majority of our bowlers do so in a slightly side position. This does not enable the batsman to get such a clear view of the hand and ball as he might wish, and there can be no doubt that the more awkward the style and delivery of a bowler is and the better he can prevent the batsman from seeing the hand and ball, and what he is trying to do, the greater it is to his advantage. It is part and parcel of a bowler's duty to do all he can legitimately to deceive a batsman as to the manner in which he is trying to obtain his wicket, and the more he can do so the more successful he will be.

Mr. C. A. Smith has a most peculiar run, which, to a batsman who is not accustomed to him, is very puzzling. Before I had the pleasure of meeting and knowing Mr. Smith I had always heard him described as "Round the Corner Smith," and could hardly understand the meaning of it; but the first time I was batting against him, I not only understood, but thought it was a very appropriate name for a bowler who started his run from a point so very wide of the bowling crease. Both Messrs. Spofforth and Ferris have very peculiar actions, and were always difficult to watch. I have never found a bowler so difficult to watch as old Tom Emmett, of Yorkshire; his action had so many motions in it that it was very hard to get a glimpse of his fingers, and see what he was trying to do with the ball, and at the last moment it always appeared to me as if he had shot his hand out from the centre of his back.

All bowlers, as a matter of course, require watching, some more so than others, and the difficult ones will be found to be those who deliver the ball in a side position.

After the young bowler has learnt to bowl straight, the

next and most important thing for him to learn is to get and keep a good length. This is one of the greatest essentials in the making of a really good bowler, for without it, no matter what amount of break he can put upon the ball, or at what pace he can bowl, he cannot expect to be in the least degree successful. When a bowler is able to bowl with the precision that is required, how difficult it is for the batsman to get runs; and no matter upon what class of wicket he is bowling he is always to be treated with respect, and generally comes out with a very good average. It is this accuracy in the length that keeps a batsman playing correctly all the time, and if, as very often is the case, he attempts to force things a little, it is most likely to cause his downfall.

Alfred Shaw was a wonderfully accurate bowler, always keeping the most perfect length, and it was a regular case of help yourself, that is if you could, if you wished to score at all quickly off him. Attewell is another who keeps a marvellous length, and I think it is truly wonderful with what precision he bowls day after day throughout the season. It is when the wickets are very hard and good that the bowlers who can keep a good length are most appreciated, for attempting to make the ball break is no use at all, and it is then that he has to mainly depend upon his length.

Now the next thing to consider is, what is a good length ball? for what may be one to one batsman may not be so to another. This is on account of the difference in the stature and reach of batsmen, and consequently the bowler should take notice of the batsman opposing him, and it will not take him long to find out and judge the length of his reach. The real and exact good length ball is beyond all doubt that one that gets the batsman in two minds, that is, he does not for the moment know whether to play forward or back to it. Now, this is what all bowlers try to do, but they cannot make any degree of certainty of it, and I think for the success of the game, it is just as well they cannot, for when the ball is pitched in this particular spot it generally has a fatal result,

and if bowlers could make certain of bowling this ball at will, there would not be much chance for batsmen.

The exact distance the ball should pitch from the popping crease is rather difficult to define, but I think the correct distance should be three yards for medium-pace bowling, and should the bowler be able to confine the pitch of the ball to this distance, he will find that batsmen of average reach will, as a rule, have to play forward; and as long as you can induce a batsman to play forward, you have a far greater chance of his making a mistake, and this is especially the case upon any wicket on which you can cause the ball to break. I know how hard Mr. F. R. Spofforth, one of the very best bowlers of all time, used to try to get the batsmen to play forward, and as long as they did so, he was quite satisfied, for then he thought he had a fair chance of beating them and causing their downfall. For fast bowling the pitch is shorter by a yard or two. To make himself perfect the beginner will require to practise most earnestly and diligently, and it will be a very good plan for him to measure the distances from the popping crease, and put down some mark so that he can see it plainly, and try and bowl the ball on to it or as near to it as he can.

I have already said that bowlers should bowl within their strength at all times, and this is all the more applicable to beginners, who are very apt to try and bowl faster than they really should; by doing this they are very apt to destroy their length and injure their power of breaking the ball.

If you will give it due attention, you will soon find out the pace to bowl that is most suited to your style and strength; and once having arrived at a definite result, do not make any alteration, but keep to it and practise as much as you can without tiring yourself. You must always bear in mind that when the time comes for you to bowl in a match you may have to do so for a considerable time, and when the wickets are hard and good your opportunities are very likely to be long ones. It is, therefore, very necessary for you to learn to bowl well within yourself, so that if the occasion arises you will be

able to bowl for any time without tiring; for should you tire, you will lose your accuracy of length, with the result that your average and side will suffer.

To be able to vary your pace is a most important thing for the bowler to learn, and unless you can master this, you will never be a really first-class bowler. There are a good many ways of varying the pace of a ball, but there is no need for you to think it should be done every other ball. The proper time for it to be done is when the bowler has, so to speak, led the batsman up to it. What I mean by this is, that the bowler has bowled three or four balls, or perhaps an over, at a certain pace, getting the batsman into a certain uniform timing: then he varies the pace—either a little slower or faster, as the case may be—when, should the batsman not notice the alteration, a mistake is very easily made. You must try and disguise your intentions and delivery as much as you can, and try to vary your pace with as little alteration in your usual delivery as possible. You must always remember that a batsman is keenly watching your every move; and, although you may not be able to deceive him in any way at first, you must continue trying to do so to the end.

I think a ball a little slower than usual is the most likely to cause mistiming, as the batsman has, to a certain extent, played his stroke before the ball comes to him. With a ball that is faster you may surprise the batsman a little; but as it is going to him at a much faster pace, he has a little better chance of timing it. Still, it is a capital ball to bowl, as batsmen very often miss it altogether and are bowled. When you bowl this fast one you should, as a rule, try and hit the wicket; but it is a good plan to occasionally bowl it a shade outside the off stump, for the purpose of a catch being given.

F. R. Spofforth, the Australian bowler, was the most successful and best exponent of the art of variation of pace that I have ever seen; and it was with the ball a little slower than his usual medium-paced deliveries that he was the most deadly. For a length of time I had the pleasure of keeping wicket to

him, and it was from that position that I saw how he had mastered and perfected his variation of pace. I have seen him take the same run, go through the same action, and, to all appearances, bowl with exactly the same strength as the previous ball; but, when the batsman played forward, he was much too soon. He also bowled a fast ball very well indeed, and could do it at the very last moment, without any apparent change: the only thing he did was to change the position of his fingers, as he held the ball when bowling fast in a totally different way to when he was causing it to break. I have often heard Spofforth termed a fast bowler, and wondered why it should be so; for of late years he was always considered—at least, in Australia—a medium-pace bowler. He could, of course, bowl very fast if he wished; and it is a fact that when he first came out in important cricket he was a fast bowler, pure and simple; but when he solved the difficult problem of breaking a ball as he wished, I know it was always a matter of surprise to him when he was called a fast bowler.

Alfred Shaw was another who could vary his pace well, and, with his perfect length, it was indeed a hard matter to get runs. He invariably bowled the slower ball, and when doing so was very fond of bowling it a little more in the air, this causing the flight to be far more difficult to judge.

Of the bowlers of the present day, I certainly think George Lohmann is the best at varying his pace without altering his action or delivery in any way. When playing against him I have often, whilst standing at the end from which he has been bowling, watched him very attentively whilst in the act of delivering the ball; and I must confess to not being able to notice any material difference in the delivery when he bowls the slower ball. What struck me very much was, that his sleeve made far more noise and rustle when he was bowling the slower ball than it did at other times; he seemed to be moving his arm through the air with the same amount of velocity, whilst at the same time, as it were, putting a break on the arm. He is the only bowler in whom I have noticed

this, to me, peculiarity, and I must admit to having often wondered over it.

When the young bowler has advanced so that he can bowl straight and maintain his accuracy of length, he must devote his time and attention to perfecting his ability to break the ball; for, unless he has this power, he never will be considered or ever will be, a first-class bowler.

There are times when the wickets are so good that it is nearly impossible to get the slightest break at all on the ball; but these are the exception, and the bowler never knows the moment a change may occur; and if he gets on to a wicket that will help him, it is then the full advantage of the power of breaking comes into force. I have often heard discussed the question of what is the correct or most useful distance to make the ball break, and opinions vary very much indeed. Some people think if the ball breaks a great distance it is the most dangerous; for myself, I do not think so; for then there is always the danger, after beating the batsman, of beating the wicket and the wicket-keeper; and this is to be avoided. What is required, and has proved the most effective, is a break of sufficient distance that, should it beat the bat, the ball will invariably hit the wicket. Slow and medium-paced bowlers get the greatest amount of break on; and it is very rarely a fast bowler is seen who can put a break on with the same amount of accuracy and certainty that a medium-paced bowler can. I think, when a fast bowler breaks, it is more from natural causes than any others.

As a rule, all right-hand bowlers break from the off, whilst left-hand bowlers break from the leg side; and when you have obtained that command of the ball that is so absolutely necessary to enable you to break the ball when you wish, do not make the very great mistake of trying to break from the other side to that you have mastered and perfected. If you have mastered one, you will find it quite enough. Should your ambition prompt you to try and do both, you will stand a very great chance of ruining your bowling altogether. I have known two

or three cases when bowlers were not satisfied with being able to bowl a fine off-break, but thought they could and would master the leg-break, the consequence being in the end that they could neither bowl one or the other well, lost their length, and, from being really good bowlers, descended into the second class. I have never yet met a bowler who was master of both, and I do not think it at all likely I ever shall.

The way to hold the ball for the purpose of causing it to break is very hard to illustrate in theory; for one can only say it is held in a certain way in the hand, with the fingers in the position that the bowlers find most effectual for the purpose of doing what they wish. Bowlers differ very much in the way they hold the ball; but my experience has been that they manage to obtain the same result, in a greater or lesser degree. Whether the break is caused with the fingers or the wrist, or a combination of both, is a question; and I think the young beginner, or anyone who is in search of knowledge, cannot do better than seek out some good bowlers and obtain from them some practical illustrations, which will be of far more use than anything I may put down in these pages.

The wicket is answerable, to a very great extent, for the amount of break the bowler is able to put on. On some hard, good wickets, and when it is wet and the ball cuts through, it is very little indeed, if any, that can be obtained; but when they are drying after wet and get sticky, then it is that the bowlers can generally do what they like. Then there is the wicket that has been hard and good but has worn and crumbled; some bowlers are much more dangerous on this class of wicket than on any other; for they can get the break on, and the ball doing everything much more quickly than on a slow wicket, is much more dangerous. This is the kind of wicket that the Australian bowler, C. T. Turner, regularly shines upon; and I shall long remember his bowling on one of these wickets against Victoria, in one of the Inter-Colonial matches played in Melbourne. He bowled T. Horan and another fine batsman with balls that pitched outside the off-stump and,



breaking across like lightning, hit the top of the leg-stump. Lohmann and Attewell also know how to fully appreciate and take advantage of this kind of wicket.

Every bowler should take the trouble to have a good look at and examine the condition of the wicket upon which he has to bowl; he should examine both ends and take particular notice if one end is more likely to assist him than the other. He might also fancy one particular end; and I must say, although it may appear a little childish, there is a great deal in this fancy, for I have very frequently seen bowlers have a fancy for one end and always bowl very much better from it than they would from the other. Then, again, there may be a little slope which will assist your break, and you may notice other little things from which you will derive some advantage. It certainly is the duty of a bowler to do all in his power for his side; and I can assure him, if he will at all times take the trouble to do as I have stated, he has a far greater chance of being successful than the bowler who goes to the wicket in the most casual way, thinking, no doubt, that he is only required to pick up the ball and bowl it. If there should be a tree or building behind the wicket, I dare say you will be observant enough to see it, and to know that should your arm and hand, when delivering the ball, to use a cricketing phrase, get up in them, the flight will be all the harder to judge.

It is also very necessary that a bowler should be able to judge the pace of a wicket, so as to be able to form an opinion as to what pace bowling it will best take. It might be thought that upon a wicket on which a break can be put on the ball, any slow or medium-pace bowler would, as a matter of course, bowl their ordinary pace. I know this is usually done; but how much better they might bowl if they found out they could do far more with the ball by bowling either just a shade slower or faster, as the case might be. In all my experience I have not met many bowlers who have done it; and I have often wondered if they had thought about it. Spofforth always did it, and I have often seen a good many runs hit off his first three

or four overs through his doing so, as he bowled a good many loose balls that he otherwise would not have done. He has often said to me : "Wait until I get the pace of the wicket," and I can only say the result, as a rule, was well worth the waiting. Some wickets will also take fast bowling when the medium pace does not get up at all, and the quicker this is ascertained the better for your side.

It is very true that every batsman has a weak spot in his defence, and the finding this out is what every bowler must make a particular study of; and it is only by keen perception and practical knowledge that you will be able to do so. There are many batsmen who are rather shaky when they first go in, so it is absolutely necessary for you to strain every nerve in trying to find out the weak spot before a batsman settles down, once found, keep at it as much as ever you can, for you will have a great chance of obtaining the wicket. Some may ask what is the best ball to bowl first. One that I will strongly advise you not to bowl is a short one, for that is about the very best ball a fresh arrival can have to score from. A good yorker is at all times a very difficult ball to stop; and is doubly so, when it is the first ball one receives; and if you can depend upon yourself to bowl it straight, I would recommend you to make it the first ball you send down to every fresh batsman, and whether he is prepared and ready for it or not, you will find there will be a good deal of difficulty in stopping it.

Before a batsman settles down, you must bring forth all your resources and try him with every kind of ball that is in your power, always bearing in mind to keep a good length. Try if you can make him play forward at you, and keep him at it, for a batsman's forward play is not nearly so certain at the commencement of his innings as it is later on, when he has got into his timing, and is every minute getting a better sight of the ball. Also don't forget to try if he will have a hit, as a great many batsmen cannot resist the temptation of a ball nicely tossed up. I always think a capital ball to bowl is one

on the off-side, and off which the batsman has every reason to think he can score; he is almost certain to try for the runs, and through not having quite got into his timing, is very likely to make a mistake and give a catch.

A very important feature in every good bowler, and one that must never be forgotten, is, that he does and must always remember there are ten other men on his side to assist him in getting the opponents out. I have often seen bowlers who seemed to forget there were fieldsmen ready and eager for a catch, should he only try and tempt the batsmen to hit; but no, they kept pegging away, satisfied to bowl maiden overs, and, to all appearances, waiting for a hole to be worn in the bat through which the ball might pass and hit the wicket. I think there is far greater skill and credit in a bowler bowling for his field than merely hitting the wicket; for it is a very hard and difficult matter indeed to bowl well enough on a very good wicket, so as to cause the batsmen to make that slight mistake which causes the ball to go into the air.

There are many first-class bowlers who are satisfied to bowl maiden overs, but I do not wish to hold these up to young bowlers as a pattern; much rather would I advise him to try and follow in the footsteps of such bowlers as Messrs. F. R. Spofforth, A. G. Steel, Tom Emmett and little Johnnie Briggs. I think every batsman that has ever played against them will admit they were, and are, a fair sample of the worrying order; never once, I am sure, did they think of maiden overs, but all their thoughts were concentrated about getting the man out. I have seen them try every kind of ball and keep on trying, so that a batsman might never feel thoroughly at home.

They did not mind being hit; and, in fact, would very often humour any particular stroke that a batsman was fond of; knowing very well that the slightest mistake would most likely be fatal.

Another thing that the beginner should, as it were, educate himself up to, is, not to allow the missing of chances off his bowling to affect him. Of course, this may be far more easy

to some than to others, for all temperaments are not alike. It is, no doubt, very annoying to see chances missed; and there are a good many bowlers of the present day who bowl very much better when no catches are dropped. The bowler, therefore, should not allow this, or, in fact, anything to ruffle his temper; do not even think what I have frequently heard bowlers exclaiming: "Oh, what is the use of bowling; they can't catch them off me!" rather let it be a stimulus to renewed exertion and a determination to succeed. I have very often seen bowlers put out at bad fielding, a chance missed, or some other little things that do happen in the field, and invariably with the result, that for a few overs, they have lost their length and bowled really badly, the consequence being a suffering of the analysis.

There are a few bowlers who make the ball curl in the air and a good many others who make the ball go quickly off the pitch. As I have never yet met a bowler who could explain to me how he did either of these things, I need hardly say that it would be quite useless for me to attempt a task far beyond my ken.

Lob bowling does not meet with anything like the same amount of support and attention that it deserves, for a really good lob bowler is invaluable to a side, and there are a great many batsmen who cannot play lobs at all. The lob bowler has to depend principally on his field, for the majority of wickets he obtains are either caught or stumped. He wants to be accurate in his length and must not be too slow, for then he would allow the batsman to get out and hit the ball before it pitched. He also wants to be able to break the ball well—and if he can manage to break the ball from either side so much more difficult will he be. Do not be afraid to practise them for they are very useful.

In conclusion, let me advise the young bowler to not only practise well, but to watch all the good bowlers he possibly can, and then to think things out for himself; for it is only by paying the greatest attention and giving the matter earnest

thought and study that he will ever become a really first-class bowler.

## LAWS OF CRICKET.

AS REVISED BY THE MARYLEBONE CRICKET CLUB, MAY, 1890.

1. A match is played between two sides of eleven players each, unless otherwise agreed to; each side has two innings, taken alternately, except in the case provided for in Law 53. The choice of innings shall be decided by tossing.

2. The score shall be reckoned by runs. A run is scored—1st: So often as the batsmen after a hit, or at any time when the ball is in play, shall have crossed, and made good their ground from end to end. 2nd: For penalties under Laws 16, 34, 41, and allowances under 44. Any run or runs so scored shall be duly recorded by scorers appointed for the purpose. The side which scores the greatest number of runs wins the match. No match is won unless played out or given up, except in the case provided for in Law 45.

3. Before the commencement of the match two umpires shall be appointed, one for each end.

4. The ball shall weigh not less than  $5\frac{1}{2}$  oz., nor more than  $5\frac{3}{4}$  oz. It shall measure not less than 9 in., nor more than  $9\frac{1}{4}$  in. in circumference. At the beginning of each innings either side may demand a new ball.

5. The bat shall not exceed  $4\frac{1}{4}$  in. in the widest part; it shall not be more than 38 in. in length.

6. The wickets shall be pitched opposite and parallel to each other, at a distance of 22 yards. Each wicket shall be 8 in. in width and consist of three stumps, with two bails upon the top. The stumps shall be of equal and sufficient

size to prevent the ball from passing through, 27 in. out of the ground. The bails shall be each 4 in. in length, and when in position, on the top of the stumps, shall not project more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. above them. The wickets shall not be changed during a match, unless the ground between them become unfit for play, and then only by consent of both sides.

7. The bowling crease shall be in a line with the stumps, 6 ft. 8 in. in length; the stumps in the centre, with a return crease at each end, at right angles behind the wicket.

8. The popping crease shall be marked 4 ft. from the wicket, parallel to it, and be deemed unlimited in length.

9. The ground shall not be rolled, watered, covered, mown or beaten during a match, except before the commencement of each innings and of each day's play, when, unless the in-side object, the ground shall be swept and rolled for not more than ten minutes. This shall not prevent the batsman from beating the ground with his bat, nor the batsman nor bowler from using sawdust in order to obtain a proper foothold.

10. The ball must be bowled: if thrown or jerked, the umpire shall call "No ball."

11. The bowler shall deliver the ball with one foot on the ground behind the bowling crease, and within the return crease, otherwise the umpire shall call "No ball."

12. If the bowler shall bowl the ball so high over or so wide of the wicket that in the opinion of the umpire it is not within reach of the striker, the umpire shall call "Wide ball."

13. The ball shall be bowled in overs of five balls from each wicket alternately. When five balls have been bowled, and the ball is finally settled in the bowler's or wicket-keeper's hands, the umpire shall call "Over." Neither a "No-ball" nor a "Wide-ball" shall be reckoned as one of the "Over."

14. The bowler shall be allowed to change ends as often as he pleases, provided only that he does not bowl two overs consecutively in one innings.

15. The bowler may require the batsman at the wicket from which he is bowling to stand on that side of it which he may direct.

16. The striker may hit a "no-ball," and whatever runs result shall be added to his score; but he shall not be out from a "no-ball," unless he be run out or break laws 26, 27, 29, 30. All runs made from a "no-ball," otherwise than from the bat, shall be scored "no-balls," and if no run be made one run shall be added to that score. From a "wide ball" as many runs as are run shall be added to the score as "wide balls," and if no run be otherwise obtained one run shall be so added.

17. If the ball, not having been called "wide" or "no-ball," pass the striker, without touching his bat, or person, and any runs be obtained, the umpire shall call "bye;" but if the ball touch any part of the striker's person (hand excepted) and any run be obtained, the umpire shall call "leg-bye," such runs to be scored "byes" and "leg-byes" respectively.

18. At the beginning of the match, and of each innings, the umpire at the bowler's wicket shall call "Play"; from that time no trial ball shall be allowed to any bowler on the ground between the wickets, and when one of the batsmen is out the use of the bat shall not be allowed to any person until the next batsman shall come in.

19. A batsman shall be held to be "out of his ground" unless his bat in hand or some part of his person be grounded within the line of the popping crease.

20. The wicket shall be held to be "down" when either of

the bails is struck off, or, if both bails be off, when a stump is struck out of the ground.

The striker is out—

21. If the wicket be bowled down, even if the ball first touch the striker's bat or person :—"Bowled."

22. Or, if the ball, from a stroke of the bat or hand, but not the wrist, be held before it touch the ground, although it be hugged to the body of the catcher :—"Caught."

23. Or, if in playing at the ball, provided it be not touched by the bat or hand, the striker be out of his ground, and the wicket be put down by the wicket keeper with the ball or with hand or arm, with ball in hand :—"Stumped."

24. Or, if with any part of his person he stop the ball, which in the opinion of the umpire at the bowler's wicket shall have been pitched in a straight line from it to the striker's wicket and would have hit it :—"Leg before Wicket."

25. Or, if in playing at the ball he hit down his wicket with his bat or any part of his person or dress :—"Hit wicket."

26. Or, if under pretence of running, or otherwise, either of the batsmen wilfully prevent a ball from being caught :—"Obstructing the field."

27. Or, if the ball be struck, or be stopped by any part of his person, and he wilfully strike it again, except it be done for the purpose of guarding his wicket, which he may do with his bat, or any part of his person, except his hands :—"Hit the ball twice."

Either batsman is out—

28. If in running, or at any other time while the ball is in play, he be out of his ground, and his wicket be struck down



by the ball after touching any fieldsman, or by the hand or arm, with ball in hand, of any fieldsman :—" Run out."

29. Or, if he touch with his hands or take up the ball while in play, unless at the request of the opposite side :—"Handled the ball."

30. Or, if he wilfully obstruct any fieldsman :—" Obstructing the field."

31. If the batsmen have crossed each other, he that runs for the wicket which is put down is out ; if they have not crossed, he that has left the wicket which is put down is out.

32. The striker being caught no run shall be scored. A batsman being run out, that run which was being attempted shall not be scored.

33. A batsman being out from any cause, the ball shall be " dead."

34. If a ball in play cannot be found or recovered, any fieldsman may call "lost ball," when the ball shall be "dead ;" six runs shall be added to the score, but if more than six runs have been run before "lost ball" has been called, as many runs as have been run shall be scored.

35. After the ball shall have been finally settled in the wicket-keeper's or bowler's hand it shall be " dead ;" but when the bowler is about to deliver the ball, if the batsman at his wicket be out of his ground before actual delivery, the said bowler may run him out ; but if the bowler throw at that wicket and any run result, it shall be scored "No-Ball."

36. A batsman shall not retire from his wicket and return to it to complete his innings after another has been in without the consent of the opposite side.

37. A substitute shall be allowed to field or run between wickets for any player who may, during the match, be incapacitated.

tated from illness or injury, but for no other reason, except with the consent of the opposite side.

38. In all cases where a substitute shall be allowed, the consent of the opposite side shall be obtained as to the person to act as substitute and the place in the field which he shall take.

39. In case any substitute shall be allowed to run between wickets, the striker may be run out if either he or his substitute be out of his ground. If the striker be out of his ground while the ball is in play, that wicket which he has left may be put down and the striker given out, although the other batsman may have made good the ground at that end, and the striker and his substitute at the other end.

40. A batsman is liable to be out for any infringement of of the laws by his substitute.

41. The fieldsman may stop the ball with any part of his person, but if he wilfully stop it otherwise the ball shall be "dead," and five runs added to the score. Whatever runs may have been made five only shall be added.

42. The wicket-keeper shall stand behind the wicket. If he shall take the ball for the purpose of stumping before it has passed the wicket, or if he shall incommode the striker by any noise or motion, or if any part of his person be over or before the wicket, the striker shall not be out, excepting under laws 26, 27, 28, 29 and 30.

43. The umpires are the sole judges of fair or unfair play, of the fitness of the ground, the weather and the light for play; all disputes shall be determined by them, and if they disagree the actual state of things shall continue.

44. They shall pitch fair wickets, arrange boundaries where necessary, and the allowances to be made for them, and change ends after each side has had one innings.

45. They shall allow two minutes for each striker to come in, and ten minutes between each innings. When they shall call "play," the side refusing to play shall lose the match.

46. They shall not order a batsman out unless appealed to by the other side.

47. The umpire at the bowler's wicket shall be appealed to before the other umpire in all cases except in those of stumping, hit wicket, run out at the striker's wicket, or arising out of Law 42, but in any case in which an umpire is unable to give a decision he shall appeal to the other umpire, whose decision shall be final.

48. If the umpire at the bowler's end be not satisfied of the absolute fairness of the delivery of any ball, he shall call "No ball."

48b. The umpire shall take especial care to call "No ball" instantly upon delivery, "Wide ball" as soon as it shall have passed the striker.

49. If either batsman run a short run, the umpire shall call "One short," and the run shall not be scored.

50. After the umpire has called "Over," the ball is "dead," but an appeal may be made as to whether either batsman is out; such appeal, however, shall not be made after the delivery of the next ball, nor after any cessation of play.

51. No umpire shall be allowed to bet.

52. No umpire shall be changed during a match unless with the consent of both sides, except in case of violation of Law 51, then either side may dismiss him.

53. The side which goes in second shall follow their innings, if they have scored eighty runs less than the opposite side.

54. On the last day of a match, or if a one-day match, at any time, the in-side shall be empowered to declare the innings at an end.

## ONE DAY MATCHES.

1. The side which goes in second shall follow their innings if they have scored 60 runs less than the opposite side.

2. The match, unless played out, shall be decided by the first innings.

3. Prior to the commencement of a match it may be agreed that the over consists of 5 or 6 balls.

## SINGLE WICKET.

The laws are, where they apply, the same as the above, with the following alterations and additions :

1. One wicket shall be pitched, as in Law 6, with a bowling stump opposite to it, at a distance of 22 yards. The bowling crease shall be in a line with the bowling stump, and drawn according to Law 7.

2. When there shall be less than five players on a side, bounds shall be placed 22 yards each in a line from the off and leg stump.

3. The ball must be hit before the bounds to entitle the striker to a run, which run cannot be obtained unless he touch the bowling stump or crease in a line with his bat, or some part of his person, or go beyond them, and return to the popping crease.

4. When the striker shall hit the ball, one of his feet must be on the ground behind the popping crease, otherwise the umpire shall call "No hit," and no run shall be scored.

5. When there shall be less than five players on a side neither byes, leg-byes nor overthrows shall be allowed, nor shall the striker be caught out behind the wicket, nor stumped.

6. The fieldsman must return the ball so that it shall cross the ground between the wicket and the bowling stump, or between the bowling stump and the bounds; the striker may run till the ball be so returned.

7. After the striker shall have made one run, if he start again he must touch the bowling stump or crease and turn before the ball cross the ground to entitle him to another.

8. The striker shall be entitled to three runs for lost ball, and the same number for a ball wilfully stopped by a fieldsman otherwise than with any part of his person.

9. When there shall be more than four players on a side there shall be no bounds. All hits, byes, leg-byes and overthrows shall then be allowed.

10. There shall be no restriction as to the ball being bowled in overs, but no more than one minute shall be allowed between each ball.

## RULES OF COUNTY CRICKET.

The following were established as the laws of county qualification at a meeting held in the Surrey County Pavilion, Kennington Oval, on June 9, 1873. Representatives present from Surrey, Middlesex, Sussex, Kent, Gloucestershire, Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire.

I. That, no cricketer, whether amateur or professional, shall play for more than one County during the same season.

II. Every cricketer born in one County and residing in another, shall be free to choose at the commencement of each season for which of those Counties he will play, and shall, during that season, play for that County only.

III. A cricketer shall be qualified to play for any County in which he is residing and has resided for the previous two years ; or a cricketer may elect to play for the County in which his family home is, so long as it remains open to him as an occasional residence.

IV. That, should any question arise as to the residential qualification, the same should be left to the decision of the Committee of the Marylebone Club.

V. That a copy of these rules be sent to the Marylebone Club, with a request that they be adopted by the Club.